

DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN



CITY OF BELMONT

ADOPTED
MAY 8, 1990

AMENDED
JULY 25, 1995



Belmont City Council:
Ed Rodriguez, Mayor
Richard (Dick) Green, Vice Mayor
Pam Rianda
Gary Orton
David Bomberger

Belmont Planning Commission:

Adele Della-Santina, Chair
Bryan Rianda, Vice-Chair
Christopher Fishel
Richard Kuehn
Thomas Mumby
Gary Harris
Eleanor Knudson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Citizens Downtown Task Force:

Gary Orton, City Councilman
David Bomberger, City Councilman
Adele Della-Santina, Planning Commissioner
Bryan Rianda, Planning Commissioner
James Harrington, Finance Commissioner
Brian Chan, Finance Commissioner*
Michael Lindeburg, Chamber of Commerce
Marlene Ross, Business Owner
Dwight Wiley, Business Owner*
Jane Curry, Sunnyslope Neighborhood Resident
Kevin Ashley, Homeview Neighborhood Resident
Bret Barton, Homeview Neighborhood Resident*
Jim Wheeler
Brent Cottong*
Gary Weinstein*
Roland Kwok*
Roger Bates*

City Staff:

Elaine Costello, Former Director of Planning and Community Development
Dan Vanderprieem, Director of Planning and Community Development
John Hopkins, Director of Public Works
Ed Everett, City Manager
Sandra Salerno, Finance Director
Karl Mittelstadt, Parks Superintendent

* Indicates former member

Credit Note

DKS Associates, Traffic Consultants prepared the initial baseline information for traffic studies

Consultants:

The Planning Collaborative, Inc:

**Jeffrey Grote, Principal-in-Charge
John Dowden, Supporting Principal
Scott Gregory, Project Manager
Mary Engbring
Corinne Foo
Yolanda Daniel
Elaine Hansen
Randy Allworth
Tom McKeag
Terry Bottomley**

Economics:

**Economic Planning Systems:
Tim Youmans, Principal**

**Stewart Clark and Company
Stewart Clark
Henn, Etzel and Mellon:
Fred Etzel**

**DOWNTOWN BELMONT SPECIFIC PLAN
TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1.1
1.1 Purpose and Legal Authority	1.1
1.2 Plan Organization	1.4
2.0 DOWNTOWN PLAN OVERVIEW	2.1
2.1 Purpose	2.1
2.2 Role of the Downtown	2.1
2.3 The Community's Desire for Change Downtown	2.1
2.4 Downtown Task Force	2.2
2.5 A Focused Plan: The Dream and the Reality	2.3
2.6 Background Information	2.6
2.7 The Plan Vision: Summary of Planning Goals and Objectives	2.7
3.0 VILLAGE CENTER ELEMENT	3.1
3.1 Purpose and Scope	3.1
3.2 Background	3.1
3.3 Village Center Goal and Objectives	3.6
3.4 Village Center Development Policy and Program	3.7
3.5 Village Center Design Policy and Program	3.9
4.0 URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT	4.1
4.1 Purpose and Scope	4.1
4.2 Remaking Downtown: A Long-Term Vision with Near-Term Rewards	4.1
4.3 Urban Design Goal and Concept Plan	4.3
4.4 Streetscape, Urban Open Space and Landscape Policies	4.6
4.5 Building Form Policies	4.15
4.6 Architectural Theme and Treatment Policies	4.19
4.7 Site Planning and Design	4.23
5.0 LAND USE ELEMENT	5.1
5.1 Purpose and Scope	5.1
5.2 Land Use Planning As A Vehicle For Directing Future Growth	5.1
5.3 Land Use Goal, Objectives and Policy Map	5.4
5.4 General Commercial Land Use Policies	5.8
5.5 Mixed Commercial/Residential Policies	5.9
5.6 Highway Commercial Policies	5.11
5.7 Service Commercial Policies	5.13
5.8 Low Density Residential Policies	5.14
5.9 High Density Residential Policies	5.15

6.0 CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION	6.1
6.1 Purpose and Scope	6.1
6.2 Downtown Traffic Circulation and Level of Service Realities	6.1
6.3 Circulation and Transportation Goals and Policy Map	6.5
6.4 Circulation and Street classification Policies	6.10
6.5 Interim Improvement Policies	6.13
6.6 Long Range Traffic Improvement Policies and Options	6.18
6.7 Public and Private Group Transportation Policies	6.22
6.8 Downtown Parking Policies	6.23
7.0 IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT	7.1
7.1 Purpose and Scope	7.1
7.2 Implementation Goal and Objectives	7.1
7.3 Plan Regulation and Administration Policies and Actions	7.2
7.4 Public Improvements and Financing Policies and Actions	7.12
7.5 Redevelopment Program Policies	7.24
8.0 REFERENCES AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS	8.1
Tables	
Table 3.1 Village Center Recommended Development Program	3.8
Table 4.1 Recommended Streetscape Improvement Costs	4.14
Table 4.2 Building Line, Frontage and Setback Guidelines	4.17
Table 6.1 Existing Traffic Conditions, Circular 212 Planning PM Peak Hour - Levels of Service	6.2
Table 6.2 Existing Conditions - 1985 Highway Capacity Manual (Operations Method) PM Peak Hour - Level of Service	6.3
Table 6.3 Street Classifications	6.9
Table 6.4 Proposed Interim Roadway Improvement Costs	6.17
Table 6.5 Parking Guidelines	6.26
Table 7.1 Village Center Development Standards	7.4
Table 7.2 General Commercial Development Standards	7.5
Table 7.3 Mixed Commercial/Residential Development Standards	7.6
Table 7.4 Highway Commercial Development Standards	7.7
Table 7.5 Service Commercial Development Standards	7.8
Table 7.6 High Density Residential Development Standards	7.9
Table 7.7 Low Density Residential Development Standards	7.10
Table 7.8 Public/Private Development Program Phasing Schedule	7.15
Table 7.9 Potential Funding Sources	7.17
Table 7.10 Potential Funding Sources for Downtown Improvements	7.18

Figures

Figure 1.1 Planning Area and Regional Vicinity Map	1.3
Figure 3.1 Village Center Development Plan	3.5
Figure 4.1 Streetscape, Open Space and Landscape Policies	4.8
Figure 4.2 Building Height and Bulk	4.9
Figure 4.3 Building Line and Frontage	4.18
Figure 4.4 Architectural Theme Zones	4.20
Figure 4.5 Wood Residential Theme Prototype	4.24
Figure 4.6 Mediterranean Theme Prototype	4.25
Figure 5.1 Land Use Policy Map	5.7
Figure 6.1 Road Classification	6.8
Figure 6.2 Interim Circulation Improvements	6.16
Figure 6.3 Long Range Circulation Improvements	6.20
Figure 6.4 Parking Constraints and Opportunities	6.25
Figure 7.1 Zoning Policy Map	7.13
Figure 7.2 Urban Design Improvements Phasing Program	7.23

1.0 Introduction

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY

The purpose of this specific plan is to provide the City of Belmont with a revitalization strategy and urban design plan for Downtown development which balances future land use growth within local limits of traffic circulation capacity. It represents a major community effort involving numerous public meetings and workshops, the dedicated work of a 15-member citizens downtown task force and the coordination of various city departments and other public agencies. This process has helped to identify the many issues and community attitudes regarding:

1. What should be the focus of the city's efforts to revitalize and redevelop downtown?
2. What are the most important and appropriate urban design elements which can enhance the Downtown's physical character and commercial attraction?
3. How can the existing pattern of fragmented land uses evolve into a mix of complimentary uses, each serving a vital role in the Downtown?
4. What short-term improvements can be made, and long-term options preserved to improve on the existing and anticipated future traffic congestion problems?
5. What strategies can be used by the City to effectively implement the goals and objectives of downtown revitalization?

Planning Area

The Planning Area includes approximately 23 blocks and is generally bounded by Elmer Street, Harbor Boulevard to Broadway, Sixth Avenue to Twin Pines Park, and Hill Street to the Belmont Iceland Recreational Skating Rink. The Planning Area is bisected northwest-to-southeast by El Camino Real and northeast-to-southwest by Ralston Avenue. The Southern Pacific Railroad tracks parallel El Camino Real through the study area. Figure 1.1 shows the Planning Area in relationship to the surrounding region.

Range of Issues

Through the guidance of the Citizens Downtown Task Force, this Specific Plan has been developed to provide objectives, policies and guidelines for the following: 1) the type and intensity of land use, 2) the transportation and circulation improvements necessary to accommodate the proposed land use, 3) the parking which should be provided suitable for the proposed land use, 4) the building design theme and streetscape character which conveys the

desired image for downtown, 5) the types of public improvements (i.e., sewer, water, storm drainage) needed, and perhaps most importantly, 6) an implementation strategy necessary to finance and implement the Plan, including both public and private actions.

The Plan as a Policy Document

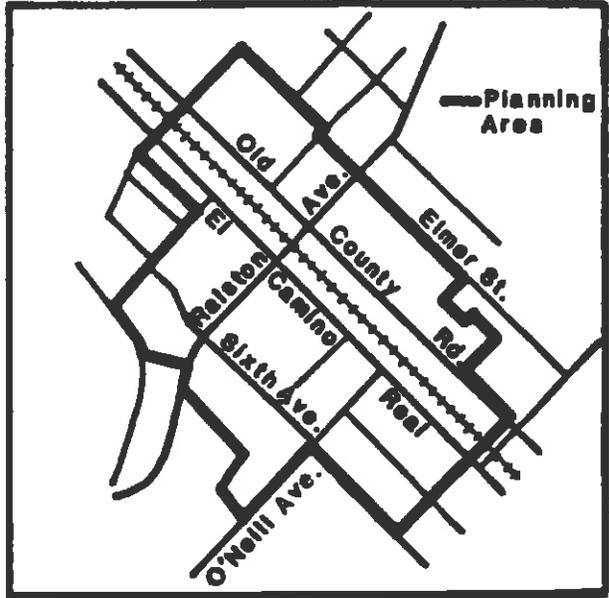
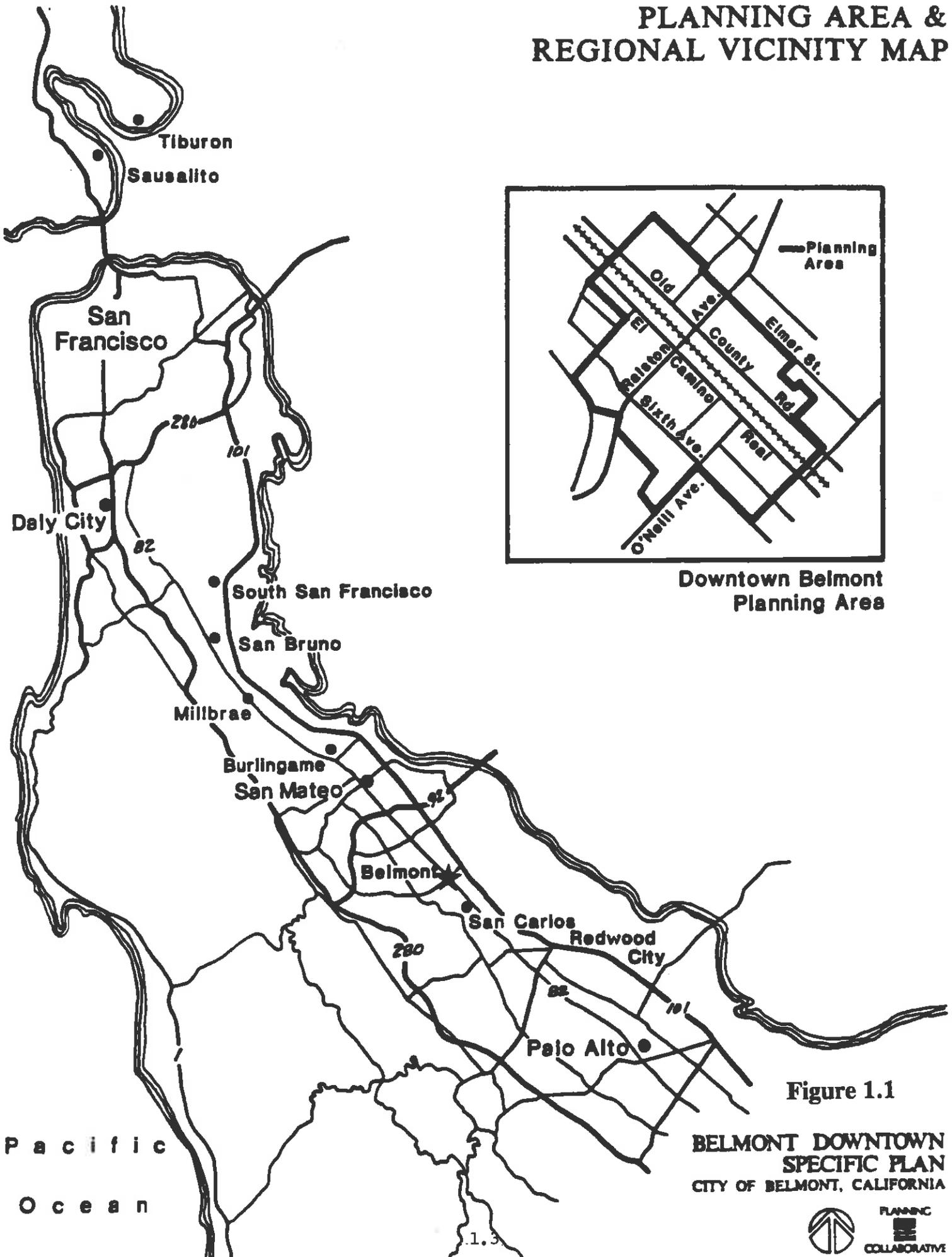
The Downtown Belmont Specific Plan is intended to guide and direct the revitalization of Downtown Belmont over a period of approximately 10 to 15 years. It provides goals, objectives, and policies to guide public and private actions. The Plan includes design guidelines by which private development proposals shall be reviewed by the City. It sets priorities for certain capital improvements within the Downtown. As a policy document, the Specific Plan is intended to be adopted by resolution as an amendment to the General Plan. The Plan differentiates goals, objectives and policies, which are to be formally incorporated in the General Plan, through the use of the proscriptive verb "shall" and are shown in bold type. Recommended guidelines, actions and procedures, which are more discretionary in their application, make use of the verb "should" and are not shown in bold type.

Plan implementation will require modifications and amendments to existing City ordinances and commitments to public improvements. It is intended to enlist the willingness of private property owners, developers, merchants and residents to use this plan as a blueprint to the revitalization of Downtown Belmont. Specific actions recommended by this Plan, such as zoning amendments, would be the subject of separate actions by City staff, the Planning Commission, the City Council and the Redevelopment Agency at a later date.

Relationship to Existing General Plan and Zoning Ordinances

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 65450 through 65457 of the California Government Code. Accordingly, this Specific Plan is intended to be adopted for the purpose of systematically implementing the General Plan. Therefore, the Specific Plan must be consistent with the adopted General Plan and all zoning, subdivision, and public works approved within the Specific Plan Area must be consistent with the Specific Plan. Consistency with the City General Plan is maintained through the incorporation of goals and policies from the General Plan into this document. Where inconsistencies with existing General Plan policies occur, the implementation actions of this Plan identify specific General Plan amendments which are recommended to maintain this consistency. Where a subject addressed in the General Plan is not addressed in this Specific Plan, the policies of the General Plan will continue to apply. Additionally, the policies, guidelines and standards of this Specific Plan should be incorporated into the existing City Zoning Ordinance such that the City Zoning Code is consistent with this Plan.

PLANNING AREA & REGIONAL VICINITY MAP



Downtown Belmont Planning Area

Figure 1.1

**BELMONT DOWNTOWN
SPECIFIC PLAN
CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA**

Pacific
Ocean



Severability

In the event that any policy or standard of this Specific Plan is held invalid by a California or Federal Court of competent jurisdiction, such portions shall be deemed separate, distinct and independent provisions. The invalidity of such provisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining provision thereof.

1.2 PLAN ORGANIZATION

This Plan is organized into seven separate chapters. This Introduction chapter contains the purpose and legal authority of the Plan according to Specific Plan guidelines for the State of California. The following Chapter 2.0, Downtown Plan Overview, is an introduction and overview of the Plan describing history, basic principles and summary of the Plan goals. Chapter 3.0 Village Center Element, contains the goals, objectives and guidelines for the development of a Village Center, or core commercial project within the Downtown. Chapter 4.0, Urban Design Element consists of the goals, objectives, policies and guidelines to direct future Urban Design Elements which can effect the form and appearance of Downtown. Chapter 5.0 is the Land Use Element, containing goals, objectives and policies to guide future land use development within the Planning Area. Chapter 6.0 is the Circulation Element, providing goals, objectives and policies to formulate interim transportation improvements and long-term transportation improvement options. The final chapter, Chapter 7.0 Implementation Element, contains the regulative, fiscal and administrative implementation actions necessary to systematically implement the goals, objectives, policies and guidelines of this Plan.

Each of the five major policy elements of the plan - Village Center, Urban Design, Land Use, Circulation and Transportation, and Implementation - is the focus of a single goal which states the broad intent and underlying philosophy of the element. Each element is organized into several subsections which provide the policy content for each objective. The goal and objectives are presented at the beginning of each element, and then repeated with the policies which support them. Following each policy are supporting guidelines, actions or explanations. The latter comprise the informal content of the Plan, whereas goals, objectives and policies comprise the legal language of the Plan.

2.0 Downtown Plan Overview

2.0 DOWNTOWN PLAN OVERVIEW

2.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to provide the reader with a brief overview of the elements of this Specific Plan. While following chapters of this Plan provide specific detail with regards to land use, urban design, transportation and implementation, this chapter synthesizes the major points of each of the elements and describes the major concepts involved in the Plan to revitalize downtown Belmont. The last section of this chapter contains a summary of each of the goals and objectives of this Plan to "set the stage" for each of the following elements.

2.2 ROLE OF THE DOWNTOWN

Downtown Belmont today looks remarkably similar to the Downtown Belmont of 20 or 30 years ago. The City's traditional Central Business District contains a wide range of loosely scattered commercial, office and residential uses centered on the major roadway corridors of El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue. The "commercial strip" appearance of Belmont is characteristic of much of the El Camino Real corridor, but the general consensus of Belmont's residents is that they want something better, something unique which can provide a "sense of place" for their downtown.

2.3 THE COMMUNITY'S DESIRE FOR CHANGE DOWNTOWN

The process for planning for Downtown Belmont began in March 1986 when the City of Belmont decided that its citizens must be involved in the future of Downtown. Instead of using the traditional, reactive form of public involvement in which a plan is developed independent of the community and later presented to the community for evaluation, a unique approach was used. The City held three workshops which were attended by well over a hundred people. Citizens went out on a walking and bus tour of Downtown and evaluated what should be preserved and what should be changed. They then worked in small groups to identify issues and the kinds of changes they would like to see. The workshops identified the major issues that Downtown planning should address and a strong consensus that change was needed in the Downtown. At these workshops, citizens developed the following desires for Downtown planning.

1) Image:

The scale and image of Downtown Belmont should reflect a smaller, village-like character and a strong relationship to the tree covered hills.

2) Creating a Downtown Core:

The block bounded by El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue, Sixth Avenue and O'Neill Avenues represents the Downtown core and should be improved as a center. Major change in this area was acceptable to create a lively, downtown shopping area. A plaza in this area was desirable. Public landscaping should be used to unify and define the Downtown while creating a place of beauty that caters to the needs of the pedestrians.

3) Traffic Improvements:

Traffic improvements must be implemented to lessen negative impacts from auto and train traffic.

4) Parking Supply:

Parking supply should be more accessible and convenient and planned to keep pace with new development.

5) Land Use Mix:

A good mix of Downtown businesses and land uses must be established to ensure compatibility between uses, satisfy unmet local market demand, and provide a more stable tax base.

2.4 DOWNTOWN TASK FORCE

In late 1986, building on the workshops, the City appointed a 15-member Citizens Downtown Task Force charged with examining the issues that came out of the workshops and ultimately preparing a comprehensive plan with a detailed implementation strategy for revitalizing the Downtown area. This Downtown plan concludes in this effort and marks a new beginning in the ongoing process of creating a better Downtown.

The first task that the Downtown Task Force undertook was a market study to determine what was economically feasible within the Downtown area, prior to undertaking more detailed planning studies. This market study was completed in the fall of 1987. The results of this study indicate that the total sales demand generated by the population of the City of Belmont could support an addition of approximately 400,000 square feet of commercial/retail space. However, competition for sales capture would be high, with the regional shopping malls already located within the vicinity. On a more conservative level, the study indicates that there is certainly an opportunity to support the expansion of approximately 100,000 square feet of convenience retail space, catering primarily to the needs of local residents who would prefer a convenient, local store rather than a large regional mall for convenience items such as food stores, drug stores, restaurants and specialty items.

In November of 1987, the City of Belmont hired The Planning Collaborative to assist the Citizens Downtown Task Force in the preparation of this Specific Plan. The direction at the outset of this planning process was to 1) build upon the planning efforts of the past, 2) develop a sound land use and economic program for the development of land in Downtown, 3) prepare specific urban design guidelines which

can provide early, positive changes in the appearance of the Downtown, and 4) to recommend realistic, economically viable strategies. to implement the Plan. Towards this end, the Citizens Downtown Task Force has conducted a series of public workshops to discuss such issues as:

1. The role of the Downtown Core and its implications for surrounding land use.
2. Alternative development programs for the Downtown Core and an evaluation of these alternatives against implementation, market feasibility, operations and design criteria.
3. The viability and economic reality of constructing underground parking facilities.
4. The impacts of future growth on traffic congestion.
5. The role of urban design policies in shaping the form and appearance of Downtown.
6. Site planning and architectural treatment within the various sub-areas of the Downtown.
7. The relationship between zoning, general plans and specific plans in directing land use development.

This Specific Plan consists of a documentation of the discussion of these issues, the decisions which were achieved, and the refinement of these decisions into specific policies and guidelines. This process has ensured that the plan for Downtown Belmont has in fact been prepared by the citizens of the community. It represents the consensus of opinions, desire. and expectation of a wide cross-section of community residents, and is the culmination of a true public planning process.

2.5 A FOCUSED PLAN: THE DREAM AND THE REALITY

An all too common problem with many community plans is that the hopes and the visions expressed in them bear little or no relationship to what can be realistically or practically accomplished. The basic principle which guides each component of this Specific Plan is to concentrate the City's available resources on implementable objectives.

A New Image

A major focus of this Specific Plan is to create a new image for the Downtown, to improve its appearance, and create the "sense of place" which the community desires. This Specific Plan responds to these issues with two major elements: the creation of a Downtown Core, or Village Center project; and urban design plans and guidelines to improve the form and appearance of the Downtown streetscape.

As the Downtown currently exists, the scattered pattern of land uses requires those people who utilize the Downtown for shopping, personal and professional services, and entertainment to travel by car from location to location. The pedestrian shopper is faced with the hazards of crossing busy streets, walking

long distances to accomplish a small variety of purchases and services, and finding no place to enjoy a pleasant rest and participate in one of the world's most favorite pastimes, "people watching".

The Village Center concept of this Plan is seen as the key element for creating a new image for the Downtown. The Village Center would form a focal point which would function as the center of the City's commercial, cultural and entertainment activities. Located on a two block area in the cross-roads of the Downtown, the Village Center represents a combination of a "clean-sweep" and a preservation of viable buildings having locations and attributes that would compliment and support a major supermarket tenant. The City Council determined in March, 1992 that the removal and rebuilding of all two blocks of the Village Center was not economically feasible due to changing market conditions, land prices, demand for office space, absorption rates, the recent recession, and overall costs. The outgrowth of this finding has been a scaling down of the Village Center Plan to one that is attainable giving current City, Redevelopment Agency, and private resources. The current version of this Specific Plan retains the key architectural, aesthetic, land use, pedestrian and traffic circulation, and other features identified as important components by the Downtown Task Force.

On a larger scale, the entire downtown district can achieve a new image, one which would set it apart from the rest of the El Camino Real commercial strip. This new image can be defined simply as "a better looking downtown". The urban design policies and guidelines of this Plan establish a streetscape of trees, building frontages, paving materials and architectural themes which define the boundaries of the Downtown, provide pleasant opportunities for people to walk and enjoy, and also provide a cohesive theme and appearance which ties the Downtown together as a visual and functional district.

Revitalization

The revitalization of Downtown Belmont relies on an ability to attract the community into the downtown to conduct their shopping, procure personal and professional services, and spend their leisure time. Because of Belmont's proximity to two major regional shopping malls (Hillsdale Mall and Fashion Island) the competition for shopping dollars and leisure expenditures can be fierce and difficult to overcome. Clearly, if the Downtown district were to compete with these regional malls for providing the same types of goods and services, the economic reality of achieving a revitalization downtown may never be achieved. However, if Downtown Belmont can manage to carve its own unique niche into the retail market, and provide a type of shopping experience which is not available at a large regional mall, then revitalization is indeed achievable. The concept for the revitalization of Downtown is to create that familiar, comfortable feeling of a self-contained neighborhood community. This feeling is most closely exemplified by communities which are often referred to as "Urban Villages" such as North Beach in San Francisco, College Avenue in Berkeley, and Downtown Mill Valley in Marin County. Each of these communities rely on providing for not only the day-to-day needs of the surrounding community but also provides opportunities for people to eat, be entertained, and spend leisure and relaxed time browsing, strolling and enjoying the urban outdoors. The Village Center concept of this Plan, together with policies intended to provide for adjacent land uses which are complimentary to and supportive of the Village Center, will help to bring about these characteristics. The Village Center project is seen as the catalyst which can spark longer-term redevelopment on adjacent parcels.

Compatibility of the Downtown Land Uses

Much has been said here about the vision and the role of the Village Center as a key to downtown revitalization, yet the rest of the Downtown, which can be easily divided into distinct sub-areas, serve their own vital role. A major task of this Plan has been to delineate these sub-areas and to provide clear policy direction as to how they should develop over time. A great majority of the Downtown is already firmly established, yet changing economic conditions and a renewed sense of vitality within the Downtown can effect dramatic changes in the long term.

Each of the sub-areas within the Downtown should form an inter-related and compatible mix of specific types of use. Clearly, the Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real corridors serve a vital role catering to the needs and services of the travelling public by providing for uses which are highly dependent upon the automobile. Although these types of uses are commonly developed in the typical "strip commercial" style, policies which require extensive landscaping, continuous streetfront facades, and streetwall heights which allow for the creation of viewsheds are contained in this plan to "spruce-up" these commercial strips and distinguish Downtown as a unique and special place.

The growing population base within the entire peninsula region will continue to put pressure on communities such as Belmont to supply an ever increasing number of housing units. Coupled with the fact that Downtown Belmont is directly on the Caltrain line providing commuter service to San Francisco, expanded residential opportunities within the Downtown are seen as a necessity. Borrowing from the concepts of 19th century European villages, as well as from relatively recent successful real estate projects, the concept of mixed use development which combines ground floor commercial uses with upstairs residential units has been programmed as an important revitalization element. Mixed use development is particularly suited to be compatible with the Village Center by introducing people into an environment which might otherwise be "dead" during non-working hours.

Other vital roles which can be effectively served within the Downtown include maintaining a strong public presence by retaining City Hall within the Downtown; continuing the presence of the service commercial/light industrial sector along Old County Road, and preserving existing single family residential neighborhoods as quality compliments to the Downtown.

A Practical Approach to Traffic

Probably the most direct example of the practical, realistic approach of this Plan is in regards to traffic improvements. Clearly, the Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real corridors are currently congested beyond acceptable conditions by the combination of commuters from throughout the region, cross-town traffic, and traffic generated by Downtown land uses. While there are numerous possible alternatives for relieving this congestion, each of these alternatives would require capital expenditures far beyond the City's capability to fund. Suggestions such as widening El Camino Real for the entire length of the City, grade-separating Ralston Avenue as an underground underpass, and elevating or lowering the Caltrain Tracks are proposals which would cost 20 to 30 million dollars or more. The basic principle of this Plan is to preserve and maintain the options for City involvement in any of these long-term solutions, but to focus current energies and resources on those improvements which can provide short-term or interim benefits, and on regulatory measures designed to minimize the traffic impacts of additional growth and development within the Downtown. This approach does not turn its back on, or ignore the significant traffic congestion problem in Downtown, but simply recognizes that the costs necessary for long-term

improvements are beyond the City's current funding capabilities, and that such long-term improvements will require continuous coordination and negotiation between a variety of public agencies including Caltrans, Caltrain, San Mateo County and each of the local city jurisdictions.

Public-Private Partnership

Similarly, the implications that redevelopment can provide a "clean sweep" of the entire Downtown area are equally unrealistic. Because the redevelopment strategy set forth in this Specific Plan is based on sound economic projections of market strategies, it is anticipated that private developers will need little coaxing or public assistance to begin the redevelopment process and to realize immediate profits. Instead of a major public involvement in this redevelopment process, this Plan calls for the City to leverage a moderate range of its financing capabilities and resources to assist private redevelopment where necessary. Such assistance may be in the form of property acquisition through eminent domain, backing of private loans, or facilitating acquisition negotiations, but is not envisioned as a fully public-financed redevelopment plan. Other opportunities which do call for direct City investment to revitalize the Downtown include capital improvements such as a street tree and other streetscape amenities.

2.6 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As has been previously described, a great deal of effort has been devoted to the planning for and revitalization of downtown Belmont. The following documents describe this planning process and should be referenced for background information.

Belmont, California, The General Plan. City of Belmont, August 24, 1982

Preliminary Belmont Downtown Concept, Final Report. Amphion Environmental Inc., July, 1986

Belmont Market Analysis Working Paper. Economic and Planning Systems, September, 1987

Downtown Belmont Revitalization Study. Economic and Planning Systems, February 23, 1988

Belmont Zoning Ordinance. City of Belmont, October 31, 1988

2.7 THE PLAN VISION: SUMMARY OF THE PLANNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following section consists of a summary of the Plan containing each of the goals and objectives of the Specific Plan Elements. The policy content of these goals and objectives is elaborated upon and more fully described in the following chapters of this Plan.

VILLAGE CENTER GOAL:

CREATE WITHIN DOWNTOWN BELMONT A COMMUNITY FOCAL POINT WHICH CAN FUNCTION AS THE CENTER OF THE CITY'S COMMERCIAL, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES.

VILLAGE CENTER OBJECTIVES:

1. Land Use Development Program Objective:

Provide a lively, attractively designed mix of retail, office, cultural and entertainment uses in one central location in Downtown. Provide for a concentration and intensification of convenience and specialty retail uses, thereby capturing a greater share of the economic "leakage" which occurs as Belmont residents shop in other communities.

2. Village Center Design Objective:

Provide a cohesive overall design for the Village Center which unifies its appearance and is complementary to the outlying portions of Downtown Belmont. The development of the Village Center should have a positive visual impact on the El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue corridors.

3. Community Enhancement Objective:

Provide a location for public activities and ceremonies, and a gathering place for residents to enjoy their downtown environment.

URBAN DESIGN GOAL:

THE DOWNTOWN SHOULD FORM A VISUALLY DISTINCT URBAN DISTRICT WHICH RETAINS THE INHERENT QUALITIES OF SCALE AND CHARACTER OF BELMONT, AS WELL AS MAJOR VISTAS OF THE SURROUNDING HILLS WHICH SERVE AS THE INSPIRATION FOR THE BELMONT NAME. AN ATTRACTIVE, VISUALLY COHESIVE APPEARANCE SHOULD EXPRESS A SENSE OF VITALITY AND PROVIDE A FOCAL POINT FOR PUBLIC ACTIVITY AND A COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE.

URBAN DESIGN OBJECTIVES:

1. Streetscape, Urban Open Space and Landscape Objective:

Achieve a well landscaped streetscape which distinguishes the downtown district, forms the urban open space network and establishes a new design quality for El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue, the major gateways and surrounding streets. A visual streetscape hierarchy should be created which establishes El Camino Real and Ralston as major prominent evergreen boulevards and all other downtown streets as having a uniform streetscape character.

2. Building Form Objective:

The pattern of building massing, height and bulk should achieve an orderly, generally low profile, urban village scale and appearance. The contrast of taller landmark building elements at the Village Center should visually anchor the townscape overall.

3. Architectural Theme and Appearance Objective:

A distinct architectural image for the downtown should be based on a mixed theme of building styles derived from the architectural heritage of Downtown Belmont. Creative architectural design should be encouraged to utilize historic forms in innovative and attractive ways.

4. Site Design Objective:

Creative site and building design should be promoted to achieve architectural and land use intensification goals of the Plan, while ensuring efficiency in automobile access and parking, provision for on-site landscaping, and a high-quality site appearance.

LAND USE GOAL:

LAND USE OBJECTIVES:

THE VILLAGE CENTER ELEMENT OF THIS PLAN SHOULD REPRESENT THE SINGLE MAJOR CHANGE OR MODIFICATION TO THE EXISTING LAND USE WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN. OUTSIDE OF THE VILLAGE CENTER DISTRICT, LAND USE POLICIES SHOULD ALLOW FOR AN INCREMENTAL EXPANSION OF RETAIL OFFICE AND RESIDENTIAL USES, BUT SHOULD NOT RESULT IN A MAJOR CHANGE TO THE EXISTING CHARACTER OR INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT.

1. General Commercial Objective:

Recognize and maintain the existing mix of retail and office space uses within the commercial area west of El Camino Real between Ralston and O'Neill Avenues as a compliment to the Village Center, and encourage an expansion of commercial uses on Waltermire Street west of El Camino Real by providing a relief of parking requirements for existing parcels through a

combination of reduction of on-site parking requirements, mixed-use shared parking, and an increase in public parking opportunities.

2. Mixed Commercial/Residential Objective:

Create new opportunities to simultaneously expand the community's tax base, stimulate redevelopment efforts, and address the growing housing needs within the downtown at select locations both north and south of the Village Center.

3. Highway Commercial Objective:

Recognize and maintain the function of auto-dependent land uses along the Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real corridors.

4. Service Commercial Objective:

Continue the presence of the older service commercial district on the east side of El Camino Real, particularly on those parcels with frontage along Old County Road.

5. Low Density Residential Objective:

Preserve the character of established low density residential neighborhoods in the southwestern portion of the downtown.

6. High Density Residential Objective:

Provide greater opportunities to meet the needs of the different lifestyles and incomes of the people who wish to live within the community at locations adjacent to already established multi-family residential neighborhoods.

CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION GOAL:

MAXIMIZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EXISTING CIRCULATION SYSTEM WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN CORE.

CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES:

1. Circulation and Street Classification Objective:

Establish a ranking of street types capable of serving various levels of existing and future land use in a functional and safe manner.

2. Interim Improvement Objective:

Enhance the circulation system within the short term to reduce delays, maintain safe and pleasant travel ways and improve access to downtown land uses, especially the Village Center.

3. Long Term Improvement Objective:

Work towards a resolution of the long-term traffic congestion within the Downtown area in coordination with the development of the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way.

4. Transit Service Objective:

Promote and support expanded transit service to the downtown to reduce automobile congestion and facilitate desired levels of downtown development.

5. Downtown Parking Objective:

Provide additional off-street parking in the Central Business District through provision of adequate on-site facilities and public parking opportunities.

IMPLEMENTATION GOAL:

ESTABLISH A PHASED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PROGRAM FOR JOINT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT, AND PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONTINUED ADMINISTRATION OF REGULATORY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE SPECIFIC PLAN.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Plan Regulation and Administration Objective:

Administer the Specific Plan in conformance with stated mandates, which include an annual review, preparation of an annual report, and actions to carry out the intents and programs of the Plan. Ensure consistency between the Specific Plan and other regulatory measures administered by the City to direct land use development.

2. Public Improvement and Financing Objective:

Carry out a prioritized public improvement program which enhances downtown appearance, promotes high quality private sector development, and improves the effectiveness of downtown infrastructure.

3. Redevelopment Program Objective:

The Redevelopment Agency should use its influence and capabilities in facilitating a public/private partnership approach to achieving downtown redevelopment goals, plans and projects.

3.0 Village Center Element

3.0 VILLAGE CENTER ELEMENT

3.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The City of Belmont's Central Business District has historically been centered in the vicinity of the intersection of Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real. However, because retail and work space is scattered throughout the downtown area, to date there is no clear center or focal point for the community. Throughout the Downtown Task Force meetings and discussions, this lack of a clear "sense of place" has been a major, common theme. The key element to the revitalization of Downtown Belmont clearly hinges on the City's ability to create this "sense of place" through practical, realistically achievable redevelopment efforts.

The following Village Center Element describes the opportunities which can be utilized by the City to formulate a new shopping core area and community downtown focus. This section provides an overall goal and a set of objectives for developing a Village Center, and sets forth a series of guidelines which are designed to act as a "blueprint" to direct the future development of this center. The Village Center concept relies on a great deal of cooperation and partnership between public and private redevelopment efforts. Planning guidelines are intended to provide future public/private partnership developers with a great deal of certainty while retaining flexibility in formulating final development plans for the Village Center.

3.2 BACKGROUND

3.2.1 Carrying Out The General Plan

The existing City General Plan identifies the need and desire for creating a new business center within the Downtown. Recognizing that this center should respond to a variety of social, economic and real estate issues, each of which needs to be carefully evaluated prior to the development of an overall plan, the General Plan set forth a policy stating that "The City" shall prepare a Central Business District Plan to coordinate public and private efforts to achieve the following objectives:

- a. To create a community focal point with a lively and attractively designed mix of retail, office, governmental, cultural, entertainment, and housing uses.
- b. To provide for concentration and intensification of general retail uses forming the core of the Central Business District.
- c. To encourage uses such as legitimate theater and restaurants which attract people to the area after normal business hours.

- d. To encourage location of professional and administrative offices on the perimeter or above sidewalk level of the Central Business District.
- e. To explore opportunities for mixed use development, especially of senior citizen housing with retail uses.
- f. To provide pedestrian connection between the Central Business District and Twin Pines Park by means of landscaped malls or other devices.
- g. To assemble parcels of sufficient size to provide space for integrated groups of shops and related uses.
- h. To provide adequate, conveniently located off-street parking.
- i. To improve the attractiveness of the CBD through sign controls, consistent sidewalk and street furniture design, landscaping and encouragement of good building design.
- j. To provide for convenient and safe movement of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians within the Central Business District and between the Central Business District and adjacent areas.
- k. To provide space for commercial uses which do not jeopardize the primary function of the Central Business District as a retail center.
- 1. To establish a workable ratio of office to retail uses in the Central Business District.

These objectives have been incorporated and further refined within this Village Center Element based upon market evaluation studies, community input, and financially realistic redevelopment strategies available to the City.

3.2.2 Retail Market Opportunities

According to detailed market analysis, the City of Belmont is losing significant amounts of retail sales in both the convenience retail and comparison retail sectors to larger retail shopping centers located in other nearby cities. The loss of sales in these categories indicate opportunities for revitalizing the downtown retail center of Belmont. The total leakage of sales demand generated by the population of the City of Belmont is equal to that which could support 400,000 square feet of convenience and comparison retail space (EPS, 1987). However, not all of this space could be recaptured in a downtown center.

There certainly appears to be a realistic demand for approximately 100,000 square feet of convenience retail space based on anticipated sales levels. The convenience retail sector provides those goods and services for which residents tend to prefer a convenient, local store or

establishment rather than a large comparative retail center. Such uses may include drug stores, food stores, eating and drinking places and specialty items.

Based upon the amount of sales dollars probably spent outside the city, the population of Belmont could also support approximately 300,000 square feet in comparison retail space.

However, in order to capture the sales which are currently "leaking" to other centers, such as Hillsdale Mall and Fashion Island, Downtown Belmont would have to compete heavily for these sales: a financially high-risk strategy for redevelopment.

A more financially conservative and practical approach, which produces the basis for the Village Center concept, is to combine specialty and comparison retail goods with convenience goods, restaurants and entertainment centers at one central location. The combination of these uses would attract a broad range of shoppers, but would primarily cater to the needs of local residents. By providing more opportunities for such goods and services within the local area, Belmont residents will be more likely to contribute to the local tax revenue, rather than shopping in other cities and allowing those potential tax dollars to "leak" out of the local economy.

3.2.3 Private/Public Partnerships

To achieve the creation of a Village Center through redevelopment, two major and interrelated issues appear crucial. First, a major retail base which can act as a catalyst for additional redevelopment is a consistent ingredient in most, if not all, of successful redevelopment efforts. Since it is unlikely that a major department store could be lured from one of the nearby regional shopping malls, a major supermarket is seen as essential to "anchor" other potential commercial uses in the project. The Safeway Store in Downtown Belmont has been waiting to formally submit an application for an expansion of its store to a "Super-Safeway" until an overall plan for the Downtown is agreed upon. Such an expansion would provide the essential "anchor tenant" which is recognized as key to the Village Center concept.

Secondly, the Village Center concept is seen not only as a community focal point with the potential to accomplish a great number of public objectives, but it is also a very financially sound strategy for private investment. However, redevelopment of the Village Center concept will involve business relocation, and the removal of existing structures in addition to normal property acquisition, construction costs and financing. Quite often, the fragmented ownership in downtown areas and additional costs of lengthy property assembly are seen as obstacles for private investment and development. The City of Belmont can participate in a variety of ways to help eliminate or reduce these obstacles in a manner which is acceptable and beneficial to existing property owners and business proprietors. The City has a variety of regulatory and fiscal capabilities which can be used to leverage a minimal public investment to assist private redevelopment efforts. These capabilities include providing cash subsidies and financial leverage from tax increment and bonding sources, backing private loans, and invoking the power of eminent domain to assemble land holdings and obtain right-of-way. These capabilities and their

potential role in assisting private redevelopment are more fully discussed in the Implementation Element, Section 7.0 of this Plan.

3.2.4 Village Center Development Concept

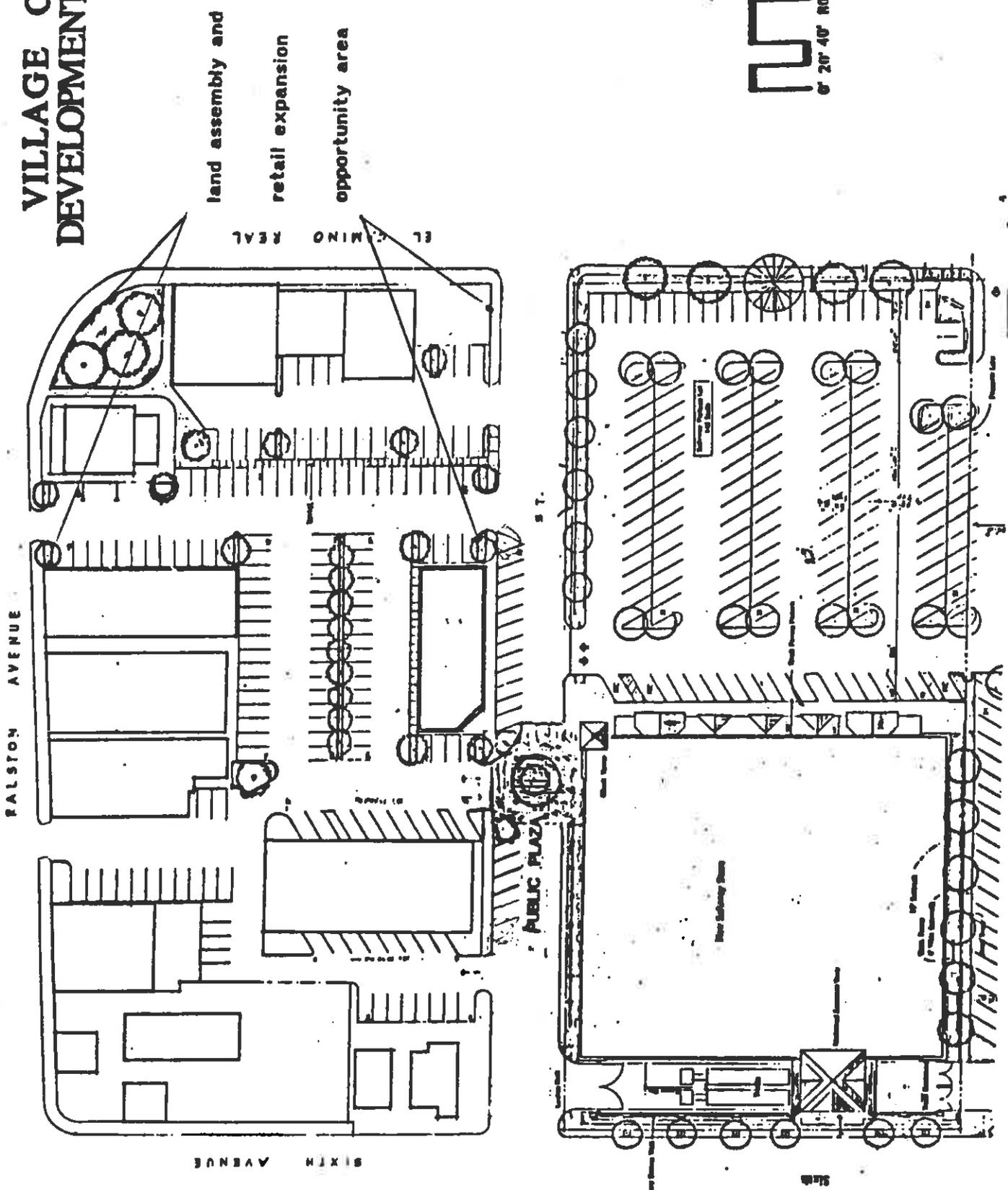
The Village Center Element, which is to guide the development of a Village Center project, is focused on the two block area bounded by Ralston Avenue, El Camino Real, Waltermire Street, and Sixth Street as shown in Figure 3.1. This area currently contains a variety of small commercial and office uses, an office building containing 20 separate offices, and the existing Safeway store.

Initially, several alternatives were evaluated which were based primarily on a specialty shopping center concept of approximately 150,000 square feet extending over three blocks from Ralston to O'Neill Avenue. These schemes included relocation of the Safeway Supermarket from the block it currently occupies and both surface and structure parking. Additional market trade area consideration and economic feasibility analysis led to the conclusion that a more compact, urban approach to the Village Center development was justified. The resulting scheme can accommodate from 130,000 to 185,000 square feet of retail use on two blocks rather than three by using surface and underground parking. The City Council determined in March, 1992, that the removal and rebuilding of all two blocks of the Village Center was not economically feasible due to changing market conditions, land prices, demand for office space, absorption rates, the recent recession, and overall costs.

The overall concept for the Village Center is to maintain the key components of design, community focus, and expanded retail opportunities recommended by the Downtown Task Force. At the same time, some scaling down of high cost items, land acquisition, and total development size is necessary to reduce financial risk and assure economic feasibility. The concept calls for one overall coordinated development plan which can be built in phases over a period of years to reflect the availability of City, Redevelopment Agency, and private sector resources. The recommended development concept, as shown in Figure 3.2 consists of a primary retail anchor, with complimentary retail and personal, professional, and business services. Along the northern Village Center Block, the development concept encourages taking advantage of land assembly opportunities along the high profile El Camino Corridor, retention and renovation of existing complementary commercial buildings, and creative reuse of single underutilized building sites. Retail expansion and renovation adjacent to an anchor tenant on the south block will help retain and attract restaurant, coffee house, and other convenience retail uses.

As shown in Figure 3.1, the Village Center would retain and enhance many of the small groups of shops, primarily comparison and convenience retail, on the block between Ralston and Emmett Street. As land assembly opportunities arise, this block could be augmented with a secondary magnet retail tenant or group of retail shops along the high profile El Camino frontage. The Village Center provides for an expanded food store on the block between Emmett and Waltermire Streets as the main retail anchor for the two block area.

VILLAGE CENTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN



land assembly and
retail expansion
opportunity area

REAL ESTATE

FALSTON AVENUE

SIXTH AVENUE

PUBLIC PLAZA

3.5



Figure 3.1

3.3 VILLAGE CENTER GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

3.3.1 Village Center Goal

Because of its major importance in the revitalization of the entire Downtown planning area, the Citizens Downtown Task Force has concentrated a majority of its time and efforts towards defining a specific vision of what the Village Center should be; how it should look, what its role should be in enhancing the lifestyle of the community, the particular market which it should target for retail sales, and the overall role of public and private redevelopment efforts necessary for its implementation. The direction of the recommendations of the Downtown Task Force regarding architectural theme, mix of use, and pedestrian interplay between the two blocks is retained in the scaled down, revised Village Center Plan.

The vision for the Village Center is expressed in the following overall goal and objectives of this element of the Specific Plan. The direction of the recommendations of the Downtown Task Force regarding architectural theme, mix of use, and pedestrian interplay between the two blocks, is retained in the scaled down revised Village Center Plan.

GOAL:

CREATE WITHIN DOWNTOWN BELMONT A COMMUNITY FOCAL POINT WHICH CAN FUNCTION AS THE CENTER OF THE CITY'S COMMERCIAL, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES.

OBJECTIVES:

The following objectives, derived from the existing General Plan and from input provided by the Citizens Downtown Task Force, describe the program by which a unique and distinct community focal point, or Village Center shall be established:

1. Land Use Development Program Objective

Provide a lively, attractively designed mix of retail, office, cultural and entertainment uses in one central location in Downtown. Provide for a concentration and intensification of convenience and specialty retail uses, thereby capturing a greater share of the economic "leakage" which occurs as Belmont residents shop in other communities.

2. Village Center Design Objective

Provide a cohesive overall design for the Village Center which unifies its appearance and is complementary to the outlying portions of Downtown Belmont. The development of the Village Center should have a positive visual impact on the El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue corridors.

3. Community Enhancement Objective

Provide a location for public activities and ceremonies, and a gathering place for residents to enjoy their downtown environment.

3.4 VILLAGE CENTER DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PROGRAM

This section of the Specific Plan provides policies and general program guidelines to direct the future development of the Village Center. This framework should be referenced as a means to evaluate future development proposals for the Village Center District. Guidelines regarding special retail uses are intended to identify the type of opportunity envisioned while allowing future private redevelopment with a great deal of flexibility in preparing retail programs for the Village Center.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OBJECTIVE. Provide a lively, attractively designed mix of retail, office, cultural and entertainment uses in one central location on Downtown. Provide for a concentration and intensification of convenience and specialty retail uses, thereby capturing a greater share of the economic leakage which occurs as Belmont residents shop in other communities.

3.4.1 Commercial Land Use Development Policy. A community commercial center approach characterizes the commercial use mix and orientation envisioned for the Village Center.

Development Guideline. The following land use and public accessibility development guidelines should be followed:

- 1. Acceptable uses within the Village Center should include specialty household goods, furniture stores, gifts and china, bakery (retail), specialty gourmet foods, wines and liquor, bookstore/coffee shops, camera/photo shops, arts and crafts outlets, antique dealers, clothing boutiques, delicatessen, movie theater/entertainment uses, sports and outdoor goods, and restaurants. A supermarket and associated convenience goods and services including personal care and professional services.**
- 2. The location of various types of uses within the Village Center should correspond to their relative need for access and public exposure. Comparison and convenience retail uses should be located on first floor locations, restaurant uses should occupy first and second floor locations,**

professional and personal services uses should occupy second and third floor spaces, and office space may be located on the third or fourth floor. All retail uses should be easily accessible to the pedestrian shopper.

3. Permit up to 3,000 square feet of first floor building area to be used for banking services provided that (a) this use is deemed by the City to be compatible with the marketing plan for commercial space, and (b) provided that the banking services are not located in prime retail locations which would be more appropriate for retail use. If the banking services are deemed appropriate then the City should encourage the Agency to recruit tenants for this space from existing banking services tenants in the Village Center area.

3.4.2 Land Use Intensity Policy. The maximum building intensity within the Village Center District shall be a floor area ratio of 0.75.

Guideline. The intensity of development is anticipated to range from approximately 110,000 to 164,000 square feet of commercial development with full implementation of all parking opportunities. The actual development will depend upon the amount of parking which is to be provided and the project scale deemed most feasible by the project developer. It should be noted that available parking directly controls the amount of commercial space that may be developed, however, additional space is possible without a required parking component due to the advantages of shared parking resources. For instance, development of public parking in City right-of-ways and satellite lots, together with limited structural parking could support additional square feet of commercial development. The following development range as shown in Table 3.1 is possible.

TABLE 3.1 VILLAGE CENTER RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Land Use	Low Sq. Ft.	High Sq. Ft.
Commercial/Retail Restaurants	50,000	77,200
Food Stores	42,000	49,000
Office-Professional/ Personal Service	<u>18,000</u>	<u>27,800</u>
	110,000	154,000

3.4.3 Redevelopment Project Area Policy. The Village Center project area is established for the two blocks between Ralston, El Camino Real, Waltermire and Sixth Avenue and is designated as a redevelopment project area.

Development Guideline. The following development guidelines are provided:

1. The Block between Emmett and Waltermire should accommodate an expanded grocery/market shopping area. The recommended development program for this block is as follows:

Food Stores	42,000 to 49,000 square feet
-------------	------------------------------

The existing food store should be encouraged to continue in operation, and the City should support an expansion of up to the maximum range to accommodate a supermarket containing specialty and convenience goods.

2. The development program for the balance of the Village Center on the block between Ralston and Emmett should be developed in an integrated and compatible manner to the supermarket block. Joint use of parking and amenities between blocks should be encouraged to maximize a unified appearance and operation of the combined development. Flexibility in the intensity of development of the Village Center is encouraged, while maintaining a maximum intensity of 0.75 FAR. Transfer of development rights may be permitted among and between lots in the Village Center blocks and on adjacent blocks south of Ralston and West of El Camino Real, and parcels may exceed their respective FAR's, provided a permanent transfer of development rights is recorded between "sending" and "receiving" lots.

3.5 VILLAGE CENTER DESIGN POLICY AND PROGRAM

DESIGN OBJECTIVE: Provide a cohesive overall design for the Village Center which unifies its appearance and is complimentary to the outlying portions of Downtown Belmont. The development of the Village Center should have a positive visual impact on the El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue corridors.

3.5.1 Development Concept Plan Policy. The Village Center should be designed as an architecturally cohesive, functionally integrated, commercial project. The focus should be new development to provide anchor tenants, facade improvements, and expansion of viable groups of clustered shops on the northern block, outdoor restaurant use, and pedestrian circulation enhancement to encourage multi-purpose auto trips.

Design Guidelines. The following guidelines are recommended:

1. **Parcelization Guideline.** The Village Center should utilize the existing block pattern of Downtown Belmont. Through traffic on Emmett Street should be discouraged, and this right-of-way should be used to provide for pedestrian circulation. Palm Street should not be extended as a through street within the Village Center. However, access to the interior circulation system should be provided at the intersection of Palm and Waltermire.
2. **Building Line Setback Guideline.** Building setbacks along El Camino Real and Ralston should allow for the construction of a sidewalk adjacent to the curb and a single row of street trees where Urban Streetwall type frontages are required. In areas with Landscape Building type

frontages sidewalks may be curb-adjacent or meander depending on available landscape setbacks. Building frontage guidelines are further explained in policy 4.5.4 in the Urban Design Element.

Setbacks along Sixth Street between Waltermire and Emmett Street should provide for a uniform building line of storefronts. Setbacks along all streets should be intensively landscaped with street trees that contribute to long-term improvement of these roadways as attractive boulevards, consistent with Policy 4.55 of the Urban Design Element.

3. **Building Height Guidelines.** Building heights within the Village Center should vary from one to three stories. Heights above two stories may be allowed for prominent landmark features such as a clock or bell tower architectural element.
4. **Parking Guidelines.** Parking for the Village Center and the Safeway Block should be separated to break up large areas of surface paving.
 - a. **Parking spaces** should be provided based upon an estimated peak demand of 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor area, consistent with established city parking requirements (Section 8, City of Belmont Zoning Ordinance) and the parking guideline of this Plan, Table 6.5. Shared parking opportunities for office and restaurant uses should be encouraged, as discussed in Policy 6.8.4 of this Plan. Such shared parking may result in a lower parking demand than the standard of 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet.
 - b. **First floor uses** should be adjacent to or have easy access to adjoining parking.
 - c. **Public parking** along Waltermire and Emmett should be maximized to reduce reliance on on-site parking lots. Satellite public parking areas should be utilized to encourage perimeter village center parking and increase foot traffic for nearby retail stores. Large parking areas should be shielded from El Camino Real through placement behind buildings or a combination of intensive landscaping and berming. Any structured parking should be designed to allow for the maximum amount of natural light feasible.
5. **Architectural Theme Guideline.** The Village Center project shall follow a Wood Residential theme which shall feature a multi-level project of varying heights and one to two tower elements.

3.5.2 Interim Traffic Circulation Improvements Policy. Interim traffic improvements set forth in the Traffic and Circulation Transportation Element should be implemented in phase with the Village Center.

Development Guideline. See Traffic Circulation and Transportation Element Objectives and Policies under Section 6.5 Interim Improvement.

3.5.3 Redevelopment Implementation Policy. A flexible redevelopment approach to implementation of the Village Center project should be followed as set forth in the Implementation Element.

Administrative Guideline. See 7.0, Implementation Element, 7.5 Redevelopment Program Policies, Policy 7.5.1 Village Center Redevelopment Policy and Administrative Guidelines and Actions.

Community Enhancement Objective. The Village Center should provide a location for public activities and ceremonies, and a gathering place for residents to enjoy their downtown environment.

3.5.4 Open Space Policy. The Village Center shall contain a prominent public open space area, such as a public plaza and fountain within a minimum size of 2,500 square feet as a community gathering place. The open space area shall be centrally located so as to be conveniently accessed by all of the Village Center retail uses.

Design Guidelines. The following design guidelines are recommended:

1. The plaza should be delineated with special pavement treatment and street furniture. Such a plaza should be incorporated into the public right-of-way of Emmett Street.
2. Adjoining private development should be designed to compliment the public open space by orientation of store entrances, architectural features, and pedestrian access to the open space.
3. The public plaza should be made available for community events, musical entertainment, and other public announcement and entertainment uses.

3.5.5 Open Space Linkage Policy. A landscaped pedestrian walkway shall be provided to link the Village Center to the Twin Pines Park (See Urban Design Element).

3.5.6 If the Emmett House, located at 843 Ralston Avenue, is determined by the City Council to be of significant historic or architectural interest it shall be incorporated into Village Center Block #2 (the Ralston block). Should incorporation of the Emmett House into the Village Center not be feasible, then the Emmett House should be relocated elsewhere within the Downtown Area if feasible.

4.0 Urban Design Element

4.0 URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

4.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the Urban Design Element is to provide the City with the policy design guidelines and implementation directive to shape the future image of the downtown. The desire to achieve an urban form and appearance which results in a visually distinctive downtown which sets Belmont apart from the El Camino Strip has been a common desire and thread running through all community discussions on the Plan. However, the important focus of the Urban Design Element is less on portraying an ideal image and more on defining a practical vision of a better looking downtown that can be implemented through available regulations, redevelopment, and capital improvements. Because the downtown is already developed, change will be gradual as old buildings are replaced with new; the process of image-building will be slow, as development conforms to design guidelines. In other areas, such as the Village Center, where imaginative development opportunities can be achieved through redevelopment, new development can have a striking, immediate impact on the appearance of downtown.

Urban design policies, while guiding change, are also intended to conserve what is valued today such as buildings with a historic character, established landmark trees and streetscapes, and building scale. Design policy also ensures mitigation of the possible adverse impacts of downtown development on surrounding neighborhoods by creating visual buffers, boundaries and transition zones.

In the proposed Village Center shopping area of the downtown, urban design policies are set forth to strengthen the pedestrian shopping environment, unify commercial activity, and enhance the attractiveness of the downtown to serve as a people-oriented place. These are contained in the Village Center Element.

4.2 REMAKING DOWNTOWN: A LONG TERM VISION WITH NEAR TERM REWARDS

4.2.1 Where Is Downtown?

The people of Belmont consistently express great pride and satisfaction with their community and the way it looks, except when referring to the downtown. Comments such as, "We need a clean sweep," or "Let's start over" speak to the frustration of creating order out of the fragmented pieces that loosely form the downtown today.

The past history of Belmont as a small community village, a stop-over along the railroad and El Camino Real, persists in the remaining wooden storefronts and "Queen Anne" bungalows,

that dot the building fabric. A walking tour of the individual pocket sub-areas which make up the downtown also evoke this remaining small-town feeling, yet the pieces no longer add up to a cohesive sense of place. Not surprisingly, one of the first tasks in the public involvement process beginning in 1986 was to define the limits of downtown. Since neither the urban portions of the City nor its downtown has distinguishable edges, the establishment of a boundary for the downtown was an important initial starting point toward shaping a new downtown image.

4.2.2 Existing Streetscape Character

A streetscape analysis was conducted to assess the pattern of buildings and urban spaces which comprise the Downtown Planning Area, and to identify locations and urban design elements which are appropriate for the improvement of the urban streetscape. The analysis indicates that the downtown consists of a fragmented streetscape lacking visual coherence yet retaining some of the visual order formed by the remaining storefronts, commercial buildings and cottages of Old Downtown Belmont. The small intimate scale associated with these remnant forms creates pleasant niches in places yet is overpowered by the expanse of El Camino Real and the lack of visual focus for the Downtown.

As is typical of old mainstreets, most original storefronts face directly onto the sidewalk forming a nucleus for rebuilding a desirable commercial building frontage. This pattern occurs primarily on the west side of El Camino Real, along Ralston Avenue west of El Camino, and to some extent along Old County Road. However, because these storefronts face onto primarily arterial roadways, the pedestrian scale of these streetscapes is lost. Throughout most of the remainder of the planning area, the sense of streetscape is weak to chaotic, with few continuous storefronts, a lack of cohesion between clusters of buildings, and a lack of enclosure which allows the roadways to dominate the streetscape.

Building design guidelines and streetscape improvements are needed to create greater definition of pedestrian space and provide for the amenity, convenience and comfort desirable for a pedestrian shopping streets. Much of this can be achieved through the creation of urban shopping "streetwalls", landscaped building frontages and street trees. Urban streetwalls of continuous, uniform storefronts can provide the compactness, ease of pedestrian movement and comfortable walking distances which provide greater advantages for a shopping environment.

Landscaped building frontages can provide for outdoor activity areas such as outdoor cafes and streetside eating places. Outdoor awnings along storefronts can create greater definition of the physical pedestrian space, shield shoppers from the rain and harsh sun, and provide for a greater level of comfort for the pedestrian shopper.

Street trees can soften the street's appearance while improving the sense of enclosure and scale, and can overcome low building profiles by creating taller "streetwalls" to enclose the street.

4.2.3 Building On Existing Visual Assets

While the edges of the downtown may be fuzzy, the center is obvious to everyone: the axis of El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue by reason of location, visual and historical imperative and yes, traffic. Logically, consensus recognizes that the adjacent blocks bounded by El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue, Sixth Avenue and O'Neill Avenue, represent the downtown commercial core which should be developed as a primary shopping area and visual urban landmark.

The visual relationship of the downtown to its backdrop of tree-covered hills is also an unmistakable asset, reminiscent of seemingly less urbanized communities in the Bay Area, such as Mill Valley or Corte Madera in Marin, rather than the Peninsula's urban Bay front. This relationship of town center to natural hills and woodlands has been a consistent theme throughout the public workshop process and is clearly a key building block by which to remake a new downtown image.

4.2.4 A Coordinated Urban Design Approach

The urban design challenge is to resolve the inherent conflict between those who prefer an almost semi-rural town character and scale, and those who envision a modern downtown urban center. The Urban Design Element sets forth a well-orchestrated framework of development provisions aimed at shaping a long-term image consistent with traditional Belmont values but capable of accommodating future urban needs.

The conservation and enhancement of natural elements forms a unifying foundation of the plan and an excellent means for upgrading Belmont's image in the near term. A coordinated program of public and private improvements promoting the greening of the downtown through a cohesive fabric of street trees and well landscaped parklets, pedestrian ways and plazas should be implemented. Coupled with a realistic redevelopment program for the Village Center area, the citizens of Belmont should realize a greatly enhanced downtown image as a result of their investments in the community planning effort.

To achieve the long term vision, consistent and patient administration of guidelines dealing with building form and architectural character, as well as policies for site planning and parking design, will be required to complete the image remaking process.

4.3 URBAN DESIGN GOAL AND CONCEPT PLAN

This section sets forth the goal statements and urban design concept plan which describes the intent of the urban design policies which form a coordinated program to improve the appearance of the downtown.

4.3.1 Overall Urban Design Goal And Objectives

GOAL:

THE DOWNTOWN SHOULD FORM A VISUALLY DISTINCT URBAN DISTRICT WHICH RETAINS THE INHERENT QUALITIES OF SCALE AND CHARACTER OF BELMONT, AS WELL AS MAJOR VISTAS OF THE SURROUNDING HILLS WHICH SERVE AS THE INSPIRATION FOR THE BELMONT NAME. AN ATTRACTIVE, VISUALLY COHESIVE APPEARANCE SHOULD EXPRESS A SENSE OF VITALITY AND PROVIDE A FOCAL POINT FOR PUBLIC ACTIVITY AND A COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE.

OBJECTIVES

The overall urban design framework of policies and design guidelines is organized by the following objectives:

1. Streetscape, Urban Open Space and Landscape Objective:

Achieve a well landscaped streetscape which distinguishes the downtown district, forms the urban open space network and establishes a new design quality for El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue, the major gateways and surrounding streets. A visual streetscape hierarchy should be created which establishes El Camino Real and Ralston as major prominent evergreen boulevards and all other downtown streets as having a uniform streetscape character.

The streetscape should have an urban vitality and should function as a place for people to walk and enjoy the downtown. It should also be richly landscaped and be visually linked to the backdrop of hillside woodland vegetation which distinguishes the downtown.

2. Building Form Objective:

The pattern of building massing, height and bulk should achieve an orderly, generally low profile, urban village scale and appearance. The contrast of taller landmark building elements at the Village Center should visually anchor the townscape overall.

New development should fit in rather than disrupt the appearance of the downtown district. The opportunity is to provide an overall pleasing building scale and profile which distinguishes Downtown Belmont.

3. Architectural Theme and Appearance Objective:

A distinct architectural image for the downtown should be based on a mixed theme of building styles derived from the architectural heritage of Downtown Belmont. Creative architectural design should be encouraged to utilize historic forms in innovative and attractive ways.

The diversity of building styles and sometimes visual conflicts found in the downtown can evolve to a more unified and cohesive architectural image through consistent application of an architectural design theme.

4. Site Design Objective:

Creative site and building design should be promoted to achieve architectural and land use intensification goals of the Plan, while ensuring efficiency in automobile access and parking, provision for on-site landscaping, and a high-quality site appearance.

The application of land use development guidelines and zoning standards to specific site conditions of individual parcels must relate to the overall design objectives and policies. Guidelines should assist the site designer while providing for flexibility to interpret the design philosophy and provide creative design solutions.

4.3.2 Urban Design Concept Plan

The Urban Design Concept Plan describes the vision for the future downtown image and character which underlines the specific objective and policy sections dealing with streetscape, architectural and site development elements. The following primary principles of Belmont's urban form and appearance describe the Plan:

- 1. Downtown Hillside Backdrop. The unique semi-bowl shaped backdrop of hills and woodland vegetation visually contains and distinguishes the western portion of the downtown. By enhancing, strengthening and expanding the woodland vegetation in this area, this historic quality can contour to enhance the downtown.**
- 2. The Roadway Axis of El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue. The visual identity of downtown will always be shaped by the design identity and visual quality of these two roadways. Special landscape plaza treatment and use of roadway materials should be employed to embellish the appearance of the intersection. Although constrained by physical conditions and highway functional requirements, a**

handsome urban boulevard image should be sought which achieves a distinct appearance beginning at the gateways of these road elements.

- 3. Entry Gateway Enhancement.** East-west and north-south gateways to the City are located at key entry points where initial views of the downtown are offered the traveler. A variety of street treatments, architectural and landscape enhancements should be employed to define and enrich the City's front doors.
- 4. Building Fabric and Profile.** The chaotic pattern of building form today should evolve to a more unified orientation to the inherent grid of the downtown streetscape. Low-profiled streetwalls of buildings flanking well landscaped street channels will define the form of the downtown district in the future.

4.4 STREETScape, URBAN OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPE POLICIES

Whether driving through or walking through the downtown, the streetscape is what the public experiences, views and enjoys as downtown open space. The quality of pedestrian amenities (trees, lighting, benches, furnishings and materials) enhances the appearance of the downtown and its attractiveness as a social place. The streetscape is, at first, shaped by the building forms that line the streets as well as what is contained in the sidewalk, pedestrian plazas and areas, and vehicular way.

Detailed design guidelines dealing with streetscape materials and furnishings further enhance and complete the streetscape policy framework. These include statements dealing with the pattern of streetscape paving materials, location of special planting areas, lighting, paving and street furniture.

STREETScape, URBAN OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPE OBJECTIVE

Achieve a well landscaped streetscape which distinguishes the downtown district, forms the urban open space network and establishes a new design quality for El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue, the major gateways and surrounding streets. A visual streetscape hierarchy should be created which establishes El Camino Real and Ralston as major prominent evergreen boulevards and all other downtown streets as having a uniform streetscape character.

STREETScape PLAN POLICIES

4.4.1 Streetscape Plan Map. The accompanying map, Figure 4.1 identifies overall streetscape policies dealing with the hierarchy of streets both as to vehicular function and

pedestrian amenity and visual form as well as the manner in which entrances and gateways to the downtown are to be treated.

Detailed design guidelines are provided for each policy element set forth below dealing with streetscape materials and furnishings further enhance and complete the streetscape policy framework. These include statements dealing with the palette of streetscape paving materials, location of special planting areas, lighting, paving and street furniture.

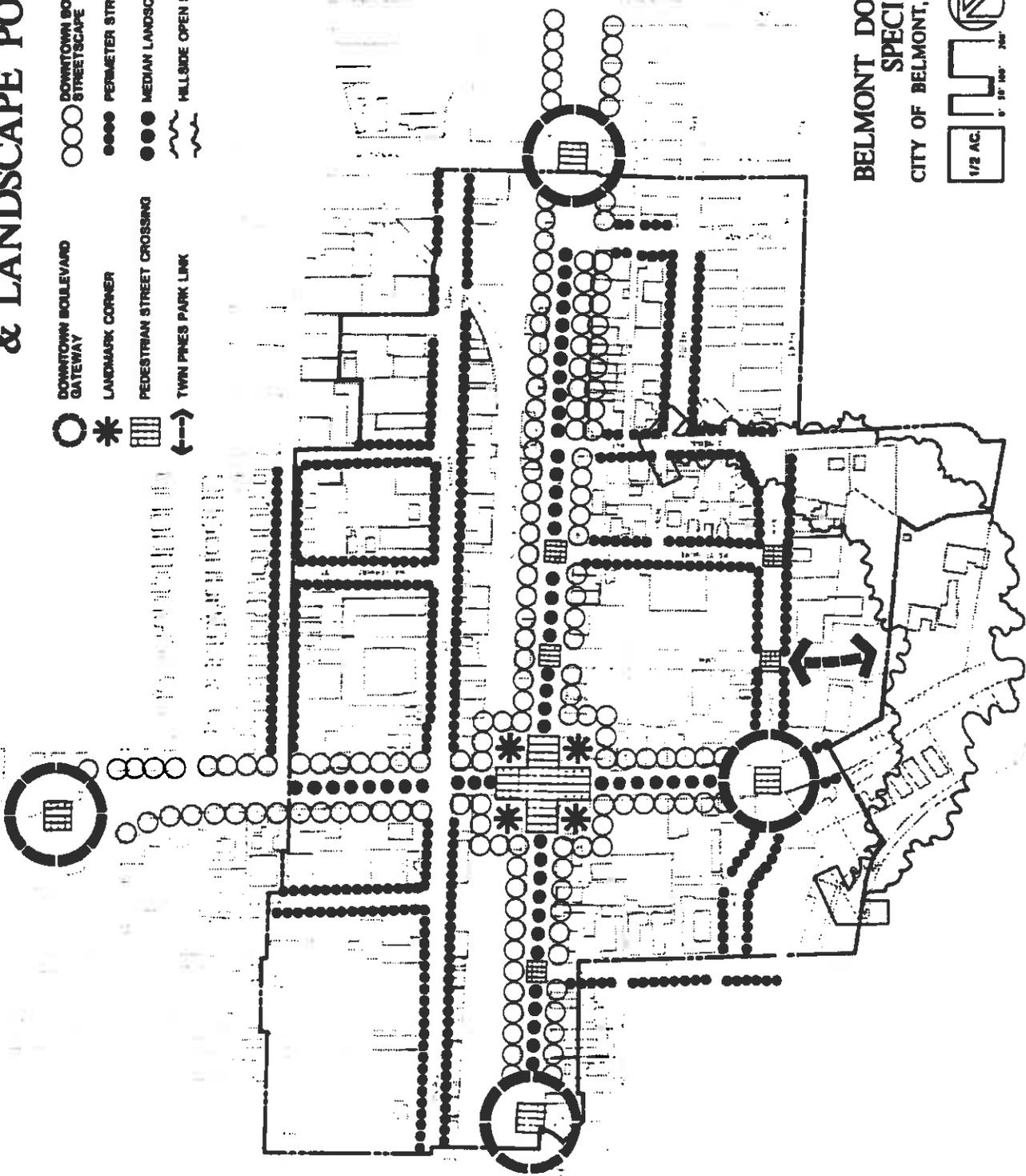
4.4.2 Downtown Boulevard Policy. El Camino Real from Middle Avenue to Broadway and Ralston Avenue from Hiller Avenue to Sixth Avenue shall be developed as the visually prominent, evergreen boulevards of the downtown as roadway improvements are phased over time.

Design Guidelines. The intent is to achieve a continuous wall of evergreen street trees along property frontages, and a landscape median where possible and as required for traffic control. The boulevard cross section elevation illustrated below demonstrate the ultimate street right-of-way treatment which should be achieved through development of El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue over time in conjunction with traffic improvement upgrades. The following boulevard design guidelines set forth the design intent for right-of-way treatment, street trees and plant materials, and street lighting.

- 1. Right-of-Way Treatment.** The El Camino and Ralston Avenue right-of-way should include landscape medians as described in the Circulation Element, Interim Improvements. Fronting sidewalks may be less than 8 feet in width, and street trees may be established in planters within the parking lane rather than the sidewalk to allow establishment of continuous street trees. (This treatment is similar to the approach taken by the City of Palo Alto along University Avenue within the downtown.)
- 2. Street Trees.** Street trees are to be large, broad canopied, round-headed evergreens such as cork oak (*Quercus suber*) or evergreen oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) planted approximately 25 to 30 feet on center. The wider portions of medians should have a ground plane of flowering ground cover, and narrow aisles should contain flowering low shrubs. Trees such as crepe myrtle or flowering fruit trees should be used for accent at median beginning and end points. Within the main body of the median, the same broad canopied evergreen trees used along the sidewalk edge should be installed.
- 3. Street Lighting.** Street lighting at the sidewalk should be a distinctive fixture for the downtown district compatible with the architectural treatment theme. The fixture may have an old-fashioned character such as the streetlights along Market Street in San Francisco (comparable fixtures include the National Series by Union Metal or those by Visco). Within the El Camino Real median, tall dual cobra-head fixtures (PG&E standard) mounted on single poles at appropriate intervals to meet Caltrans standards should light both sides of the roadways. All light poles should be painted a deep gun-metal blue.

STREETSCAPE, OPEN SPACE & LANDSCAPE POLICIES

- DOWNTOWN BOULEVARD GATEWAY
- DOWNTOWN BOULEVARD STREETSCAPE
- * LANDMARK CORNER
- PERMETER STREETSCAPE
- ▨ PEDESTRIAN STREET CROSSING
- MEDIAN LANDSCAPE
- ↔ TWIN PINES PARK LINK
- HILLSIDE OPEN SPACE



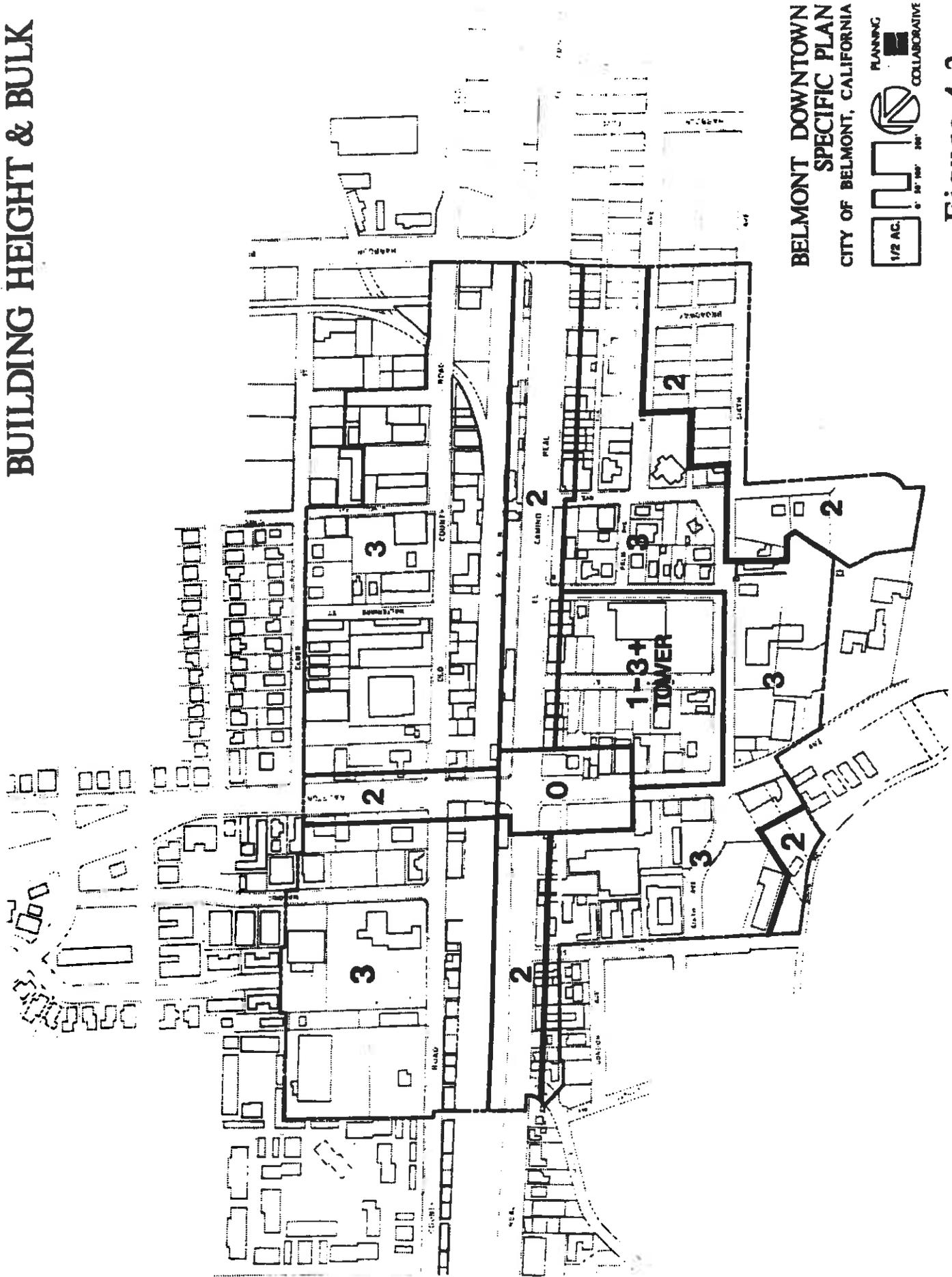
BELMONT DOWNTOWN
SPECIFIC PLAN
CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA

1/2 AC. 0' 10' 100' 200'

PLANNING COLLABORATIVE

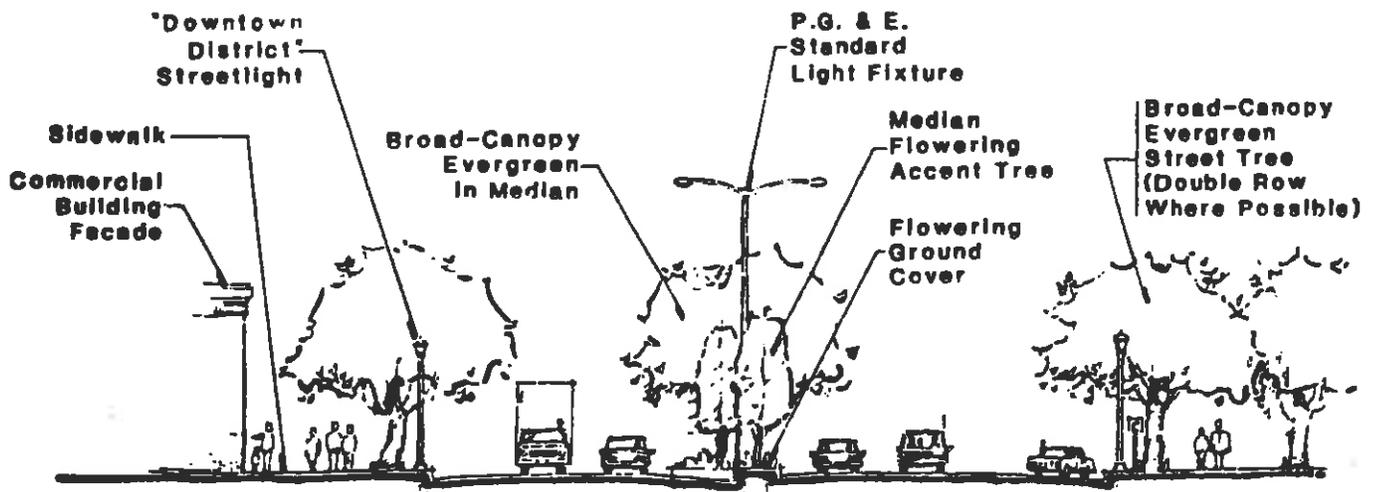
Figure 4.1

BUILDING HEIGHT & BULK



**BELMONT DOWNTOWN
SPECIFIC PLAN
CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA**

Figure 4.2



**El Camino Real & Ralston Avenue
TYPICAL BOULEVARD SECTION**

4.4.3 Downtown Boulevard Gateways Policy. An entry landmark design statement should be created at the north gateway in the vicinity of El Camino Real and Middle Avenue, the south gateway at El Camino Real and Harbor, east gateway at Ralston and approximately Hiller Avenue, and west gateway at Ralston Avenue and Sixth Avenue to form the major entryways portals to the downtown.

Design Guidelines. The design intent of these gateways should be achieved by initiating the boulevard treatment elements at these locations at an early phase in the downtown improvements program. Where available, right-of-way allows, double rows of boulevard trees should be used to strengthen the entry points. Double headed side street lights should be utilized for emphasis and an entry landmark monument and downtown sign incorporated into the median island.

4.4.4 Downtown Streetscape Policy. The remaining roadway network consisting of arterials, major and minor collectors should receive a uniform design treatment of street trees, landscape materials and lighting to create a cohesive overall image for the downtown district.

Design Guidelines. The design intent should be accomplished by the following:

1. **Street Tree Planting.** Plant medium sized, somewhat upright oval-head evergreen and deciduous trees such as Evergreen Pear (*Pyrus kawakami*), flowering Bradford Pear (*Pyrus calleryana* "Bradford"), *Tristania laurina*, or Raywood Ash (*Fraxinis raywoodi*) or planted every 20 to 25 feet on center. The evergreen trees should be planted in a north-south direction and deciduous trees on east-west running streets. Evergreen pear

trees should continue to be planted on north and south portions of Sixth Street to complete the new plantings already initiated there.

2. **Street Lighting and Traffic Signals.** A distinctive, standardized downtown light fixture (see Section 4.4.2(3) above) should align the sidewalks at a spacing of approximately 40 to 50 feet apart and a pole height of approximately 12 to 15 feet. Traffic signal poles should be consistent within the light fixture and a standard, gun-metal blue paint color employed for all metal work.
3. **Street Furniture.** Uniform use of standard trash receptacles, newspaper racks, seating benches, bicycle stands and other street furniture should be accomplished.
4. **Decorative Paving.** Decorative sidewalk paving should continue to be employed on all downtown sidewalks. However, a compatibly colored, unit paver system (such as manufactured by Kratsner or Muller Supply) should be substituted for the red bomanite brick pattern on those blocks where less than 1/2 of the block frontage is already in bomanite. On those blocks which already have a serious commitment to bomanite (more than 50% of the block frontage), the red bomanite pattern should be continued. A compatibly colored brick paver should be used within the Village Center.
5. **Implementation.** Implementation of the Downtown streetscape policy will require an expanded program beyond the current practice of the City (see Implementation Policy 7.4.7). Currently, the City requires new sidewalk, street tree and tree grate improvements at the time that property owners renovate or rebuild. This approach has resulted in gradual, incremental streetscape changes within the Downtown but lacks the coordinated impact necessary to achieve the goals of the Plan. Moreover, the integrated requirements of streetscape improvements combining irrigation, street lighting, and sometimes parking and utility undergrounding are best accomplished when a Streetscape Master Design Plan is prepared in advance of improvements. This approach also allows for a more flexible approach to project financing.

4.4.5 Ralston-El Camino Landmark Corners Policy. Create a four-cornered landscaped green at the intersection of Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real to overcome the unsightly, road-oriented character and to instill an attractive visual landmark at the center of the boulevard axis of downtown. Each corner visual element should be installed in phases as opportunities permit.

Design Guidelines. Each corner feature should form a 30-35 foot square with the primary emphases on an interior bosque of medium-sized flowering, round-headed trees such as Evergreen Pear (*Pyrus kawakami*) or mildew resistant varieties of Crape Myrtle (*Lager stroemia indica*). Low framing walls should announce the City's name and logo, at the back edge of a ground plane that slopes toward the street. Flowering shrubs and ground cover should complete the treatment. A fountain could be incorporated in the southwest corner at the new Village Center.

Each corner element could be installed in phases as implementation opportunities allow. They could be incorporated into new development (Village Center) or obtained through design open space easement dedications. Where buildings now occupy the eastern corners at El Camino Real, right-of-way acquisition may be delayed until roadway improvements are required.

4.4.6 Streetscape Plan Implementation Policy. The streetscape plan should be implemented as permitted by road improvement and development opportunities and capital funds.

Streetscape Improvement Projects. The following project elements shall be undertaken:

1. Ralston Avenue Boulevard and Gateway improvements west of El Camino Real shall be incorporated into the Village Center project.
2. Ralston Avenue Boulevard and Gateway improvements east of El Camino Real shall be phased with reduction of curb cuts, and installation of street trees within sidewalk planting area or as pockets in between on street parking spaces.
3. El Camino Real Boulevard and Gateway improvements south of Ralston Avenue shall be improved as timed with Village Center project.
4. Downtown streetscape improvements shall be phased so that the southwestern sub-area receives the highest priority followed by the northwest sub-area, the northeast sub-area and southeast sub-area.
5. Ralston/El Camino Landmark Corners program should be implemented within the next five years, as consistent with property availability and/or development opportunities.

URBAN OPEN SPACE, PEDESTRIAN WALKS, PARKS AND PLAZAS POLICIES:

4.4.7 Hillside Open Space Backdrop Policy. The wooded hillside should be conserved and enhanced as a western backdrop for the downtown as it merges with Twin Pines Park and along the remaining open channel of Belmont Creek.

Design Guidelines. Existing trees in the backdrop area should be conserved by careful site design, and supplemented by planting new evergreen oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) and redwood trees (*Sequoia sempervirens*). The visually prominent wooded riparian corridor along Old Belmont Creek should be conserved and strengthened with new tree plantings.

4.4.8 Pedestrian Ways and Linkages Policy. The downtown streetscape network shall serve as the primary system of pedestrian movement augmented by interior block connections and linkages to adjacent areas.

Design Guidelines. Pedestrian ways and street crossings shall provide an 8-foot minimum

pavement width and shall be safely located for street crossing. Decorative paving shall be installed for all pedestrian ways in the downtown, and shall be extended across intersections to demark the pedestrian area. In the Village Center area brick pavers shall be utilized. Elsewhere, a unit paver or equal shall be utilized throughout the downtown streetscape system and shall replace the bomanite pavement now utilized.

4.4.9 Downtown Parks and Plaza Policy. Usable outdoor park and open space shall be provided on a site-by-site basis for future residential development. A public park and/or plaza shall be provided within the Village Center, as per policy 3.5.7 of this Plan.

Design Guideline. The major downtown public plaza shall be incorporated within the Village Center redevelopment project.

4.4.10 Twin Pines Park Policy. Implement a strong pedestrian linkage between Twin Pines Park and the downtown Village Center as designated in the Village Center Element, Policy 3.5.10.

4.4.11 Streetscape Improvement Funding Policy. Funding for the recommended streetscape improvements shall be provided through a combination of public and private sources, as more fully described in the Implementation Element, Section 7.4.

Design Guidelines. Table 4.1 details the estimated costs for the various streetscape improvements. The costs are order of magnitude. The estimate includes a 10% design component and a 40% contingency. Costs are shown based on a phasing program described in Section 7.4.7 of this Plan.

TABLE 4.1 RECOMMENDED STREETScape IMPROVEMENT COSTS

Improvement	Cost
Phase I	
Boulevard Streetscape; El Camino Real	\$ 270,000
Boulevard Streetscape; Ralston Avenue	135,000
Downtown Streetscape; O'Neill, Waltermire and Sixth	475,000
Gateway, West Ralston Avenue	220,000
Landmark Corner	<u>415,000</u>
Subtotal	\$1,515,000
Phase II	
Boulevard Streetscape; El Camino Real	\$ 480,000
Gateway; North and South El Camino Real	<u>440,000</u>
Subtotal	\$ 920,000
Phase III	
Boulevard Streetscape; El Camino Real	\$ 375,000
Downtown Streetscape; North, East and West Quadrants	1,300,000
Boulevard Gateway; East Ralston Avenue	<u>220,000</u>
Subtotal	\$1,895,000
Total	\$4,330,000
Design Costs (10%)	433,000
Contingency (40%)	1,732,000
Grand Total	\$6,495,500

TABLE 4.1 RECOMMENDED STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT COSTS

Improvement	Cost
Phase I	
Boulevard Streetscape; El Camino Real	\$ 270,000
Boulevard Streetscape; Ralston Avenue	135,000
Downtown Streetscape; O'Neill, Waltermire and Sixth	475,000
Gateway, West Ralston Avenue	220,000
Landmark Corner	<u>415,000</u>
Subtotal	\$1,515,000
Phase II	
Boulevard Streetscape; El Camino Real	\$ 480,000
Gateway; North and South El Camino Real	<u>440,000</u>
Subtotal	\$ 920,000
Phase III	
Boulevard Streetscape; El Camino Real	\$ 375,000
Downtown Streetscape; North, East and West Quadrants	1,300,000
Boulevard Gateway; East Ralston Avenue	<u>220,000</u>
Subtotal	\$1,895,000
Total	\$4,330,000
Design Costs (10%)	433,000
Contingency (40%)	1,732,000
Grand Total	\$6,495,500

4.5 BUILDING FORM POLICIES

There are four major ways in which building form in the downtown area can be used to achieve a desired form and appearance: 1) designing the pattern of building height and bulk as it occurs throughout the downtown so that it can achieve a variety and richness in the massing of buildings, allowing tall buildings to serve as landmarks while low profile buildings may provide pedestrian scale or transitions to existing development, 2) controlling the manner in which building forms shape the edges of the City streets through building line and frontage so that the edges of building masses take on a controlled shape and image. This technique can be used to enhance downtown gateways and create "streetwalls" that have an urban feeling, and 3) conserving buildings which have a historic character or architectural interest which distinguishes the downtown as well as retains a sense of linkage to the past.

4.5 BUILDING FORM OBJECTIVE:

The pattern of building massing, height, bulk, building line and frontage should achieve an orderly urban village scale and appearance. The contrast of taller landmark building elements at the Village Center should visually anchor the townscape overall.

BUILDING HEIGHT AND BULK POLICIES:

4.5.1 Height and Bulk Policy Map. The pattern of permitted building height within the downtown is set forth on the Building Height and Bulk Map, Figure 4.2. Permitted heights range from 2 to 4 stories and provide for a 2-story streetwall along Ralston and El Camino Real.

Design Guidelines. The varied building height pattern should allow vistas of the western hillsides to be afforded from vantage points within the downtown, create a low profile building scale while allowing opportunities for more intensive development, ensure adequate access to sunlight, promote compatibility of scale between new and old development, and provide for a gradual transition from tall to lower buildings.

4.5.2 Streetwall Policy. A 2-story streetwall shall be maintained along Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real within the downtown from which additional higher stories shall be stepped back in height.

Design Guidelines. The streetwall shall be no higher than 28 feet in height whereas the step back for the floors above 2 stories shall be setback a height which is equal to the setback distance from the streetwall such that a 1:1 ratio is maintained between building facade setbacks and heights. The streetwall setback shall create a uniform, low profile building edge along these roadways while permitting taller elements to rise out of general view without creating a canyon-like building effect, thus maintaining and enhancing the views of Belmont Hills.

4.5 BUILDING FORM POLICIES

There are four major ways in which building form in the downtown area can be used to achieve a desired form and appearance: 1) designing the pattern of building height and bulk as it occurs throughout the downtown so that it can achieve a variety and richness in the massing of buildings, allowing tall buildings to serve as landmarks while low profile buildings may provide pedestrian scale or transitions to existing development, 2) controlling the manner in which building forms shape the edges of the City streets through building line and frontage so that the edges of building masses take on a controlled shape and image. This technique can be used to enhance downtown gateways and create "streetwalls" that have an urban feeling, and 3) conserving buildings which have a historic character or architectural interest which distinguishes the downtown as well as retains a sense of linkage to the past.

4.5 BUILDING FORM OBJECTIVE:

The pattern of building massing, height, bulk, building line and frontage should achieve an orderly urban village scale and appearance. The contrast of taller landmark building elements at the Village Center should visually anchor the townscape overall.

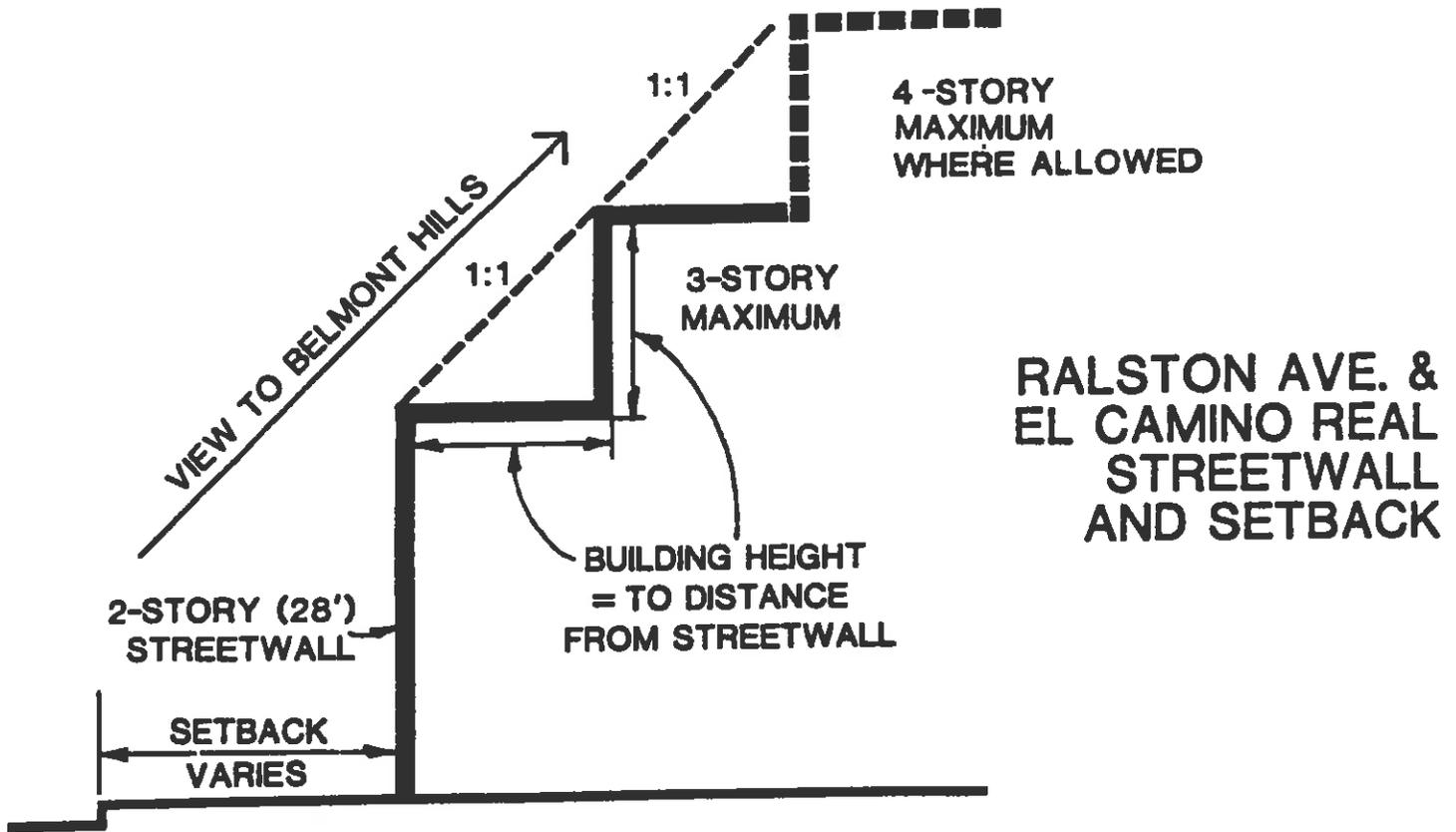
BUILDING HEIGHT AND BULK POLICIES:

4.5.1 Height and Bulk Policy Map. The pattern of permitted building height within the downtown is set forth on the Building Height and Bulk Map, Figure 4.2. Permitted heights range from 2 to 4 stories and provide for a 2-story streetwall along Ralston and El Camino Real.

Design Guidelines. The varied building height pattern should allow vistas of the western hillsides to be afforded from vantage points within the downtown, create a low profile building scale while allowing opportunities for more intensive development, ensure adequate access to sunlight, promote compatibility of scale between new and old development, and provide for a gradual transition from tall to lower buildings.

4.5.2 Streetwall Policy. A 2-story streetwall shall be maintained along Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real within the downtown from which additional higher stories shall be stepped back in height.

Design Guidelines. The streetwall shall be no higher than 28 feet in height whereas the step back for the floors above 2 stories shall be setback a height which is equal to the setback distance from the streetwall such that a 1:1 ratio is maintained between building facade setbacks and heights. The streetwall setback shall create a uniform, low profile building edge along these roadways while permitting taller elements to rise out of general view without creating a canyon-like building effect, thus maintaining and enhancing the views of Belmont Hills.



STREETWALL AND SETBACK REQUIREMENTS

4.5.3 Building Bulk Policy. The building bulk should be massed along the frontage of the block face so that a continuous building line and profile are created. Building voids should occur at the core of blocks or buildings should be primarily oriented to private streets with parking set behind on secondary collectors. Buildings should be primarily oriented to the primary street call line as given in the Building Line and Frontage Policy Map.

BUILDING LINE, FRONTAGE AND SETBACK POLICIES:

4.5.4 Building Line, Frontage and Setback Policy Map. The building line, frontage and setback policies provide for a continuity of building lines and facades which maintains the traditional urban character of the downtown. Buildings are required to conform to the designated building line, and should be oriented to the primary streetwall line.

Design Guidelines. The oldest areas of Downtown Belmont are characterized by continuous building facades setback 15 feet or less from the curb line. In order to provide for a more varied interplay of building facades sidewalk widths and landscape materials an alternating pattern of setbacks are set forth which blend the traditional urban character of the Downtown with a more open landscaped suburban character. The following setback categories and guidelines are provided in Table 4.2 and corresponding Figure 4.3.

TABLE 4.2 BUILDING LINE, FRONTAGE, AND SETBACK GUIDELINES

Required Improvements Within the Setback

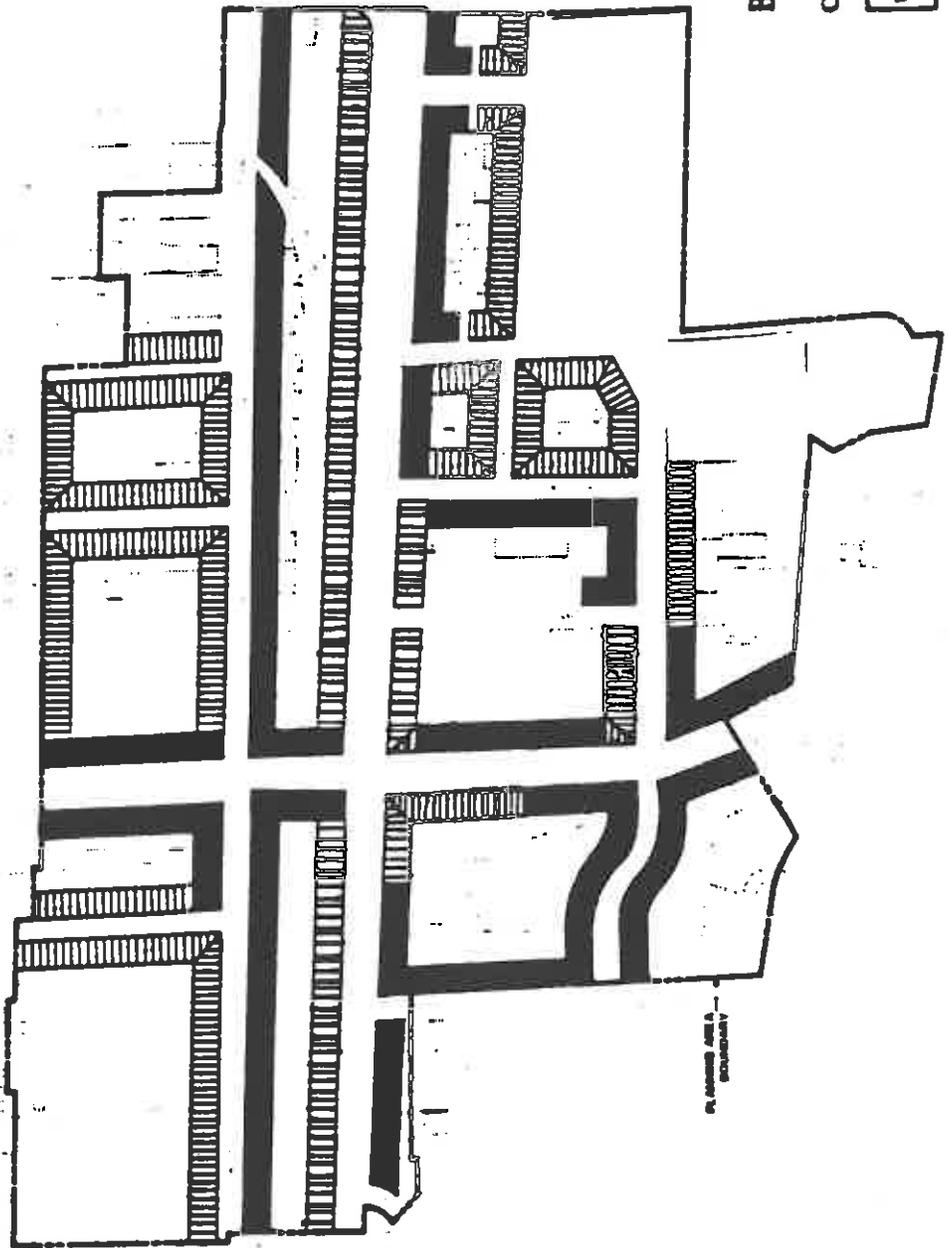
Street Frontage Type¹	Building Setback Range²	Required Sidewalk	Street Tree	Landscape Treatment or Frontage
Urban Streetwall	10 - 12 feet	10 - 12 feet	Single Row	Planters Pots and Boxes
Landscape Building Frontage	15 feet minimum	5 - 10 feet	Single Row	Landscape Buffer 5 feet minimum

¹Setback type corresponds to Figure 4.3, Building Line and Frontage Policy Map.

²Setback measured from front of curb.

BUILDING LINE & FRONTAGE

- URBAN STREETWALL
- LANDSCAPE BUILDING FRONTAGE



BELMONT DOWNTOWN
SPECIFIC PLAN
CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA



Figure 4.3

4.5.5 Uniform Landscape Frontage Policy. As part of the building frontage and setback policy, uniform landscape treatment is required for each type of setback as follows:

1. In the "streetwall" setback, the use of planter pots and window boxes should be employed to enliven the sidewalk streetscape with flowering plant materials.
2. Within the "landscaped/activity" setback, the 9 to 14 foot minimum landscape frontage from the back of the sidewalk should be enhanced by flowering groundcover and shrubs and trees where appropriate and where consistent with the building land use and function. Outdoor patios and sitting areas may be included within this landscaped frontage.
3. Within the "Plaza" and "Plaza Complement" setback, major opportunities for groupings (bosque) and double row (alle) tree plantings and mounded earthen areas should be created. These landscaped areas should be continued in their theme into landscaped islands within parking lots.

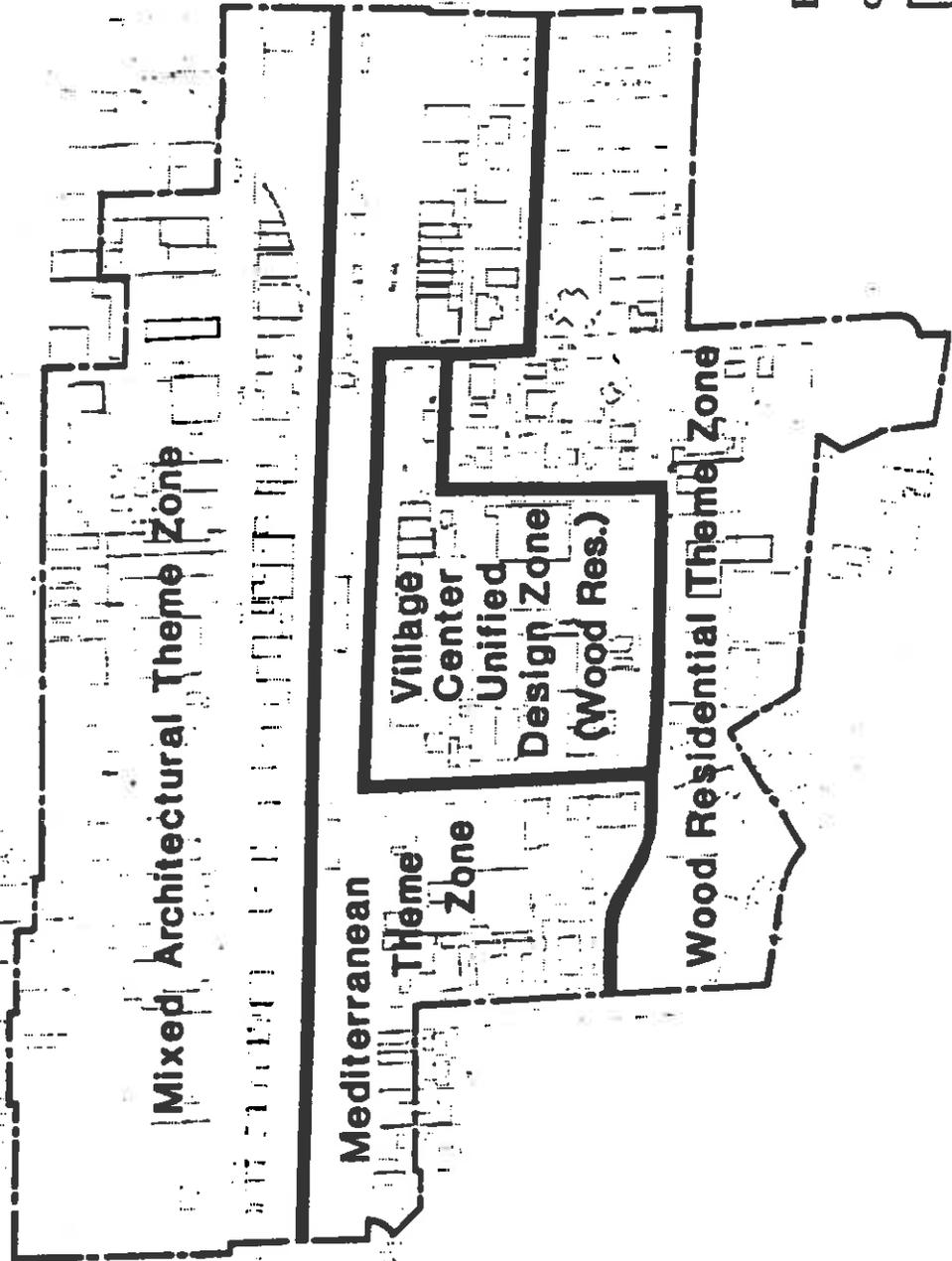
4.5.6 Retail Window Continuity Policy. Maintain a continuous retail shopping experience along streetscapes designated as "streetwall"; shown on the Building Line, Frontage and Setback Policy Map Figure 4.3 to promote the ground floor retail use and function within key areas of the Downtown. Continuous window displays and retail use would be required along designated areas on Ralston Avenue, El Camino Real, Sixth Avenue and within the Village Center.

Design Guidelines. The loss of continuity of retailing at the ground floor level can damage the role of the Downtown as a primary shopping area and undermine its health and vitality. The shopping experience is as much a commercial retail necessity as well as a vital element of the streetscape experience for pedestrians and passersby within the Downtown. This requirement will ensure that new development will not remove existing window shopping frontage and will strengthen commercial use and the shopping role of the streetscape.

4.6 ARCHITECTURAL THEME AND TREATMENT POLICIES

An architectural theme, whether adopted as an overall pattern for an entire area or for particular subareas is yet another way to create a new downtown image. The varied architectural styles which have been historically developed in the downtown include Italianate, Mission Style, Spanish Eclectic, Monterey Style, Queen Anne Victorian, Stick Style, Shingle Style, Bungalow Craftsman and Modern. Other buildings are less distinct and derive their form in a very eclectic fashion from many of these patterns. The intent of the City should be to encourage creative design and architecture. At the same time, conserving buildings which have an historic character or architectural interest can distinguish the downtown as well as retain a sense of linkage to the

ARCHITECTURAL THEME ZONES



BELMONT DOWNTOWN
SPECIFIC PLAN
CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA



Figure 4.4

decorative but should provide for recessed window glass surface which creates a deep shadow box effect in the building facade.

3. **Porches and Entry Ways.** Ground floor porches which may enclose the first story, include the front entrance and may wrap around a portion of the building to accentuate the asymmetry of the facade shall be encouraged at the first floor level.
4. **Signage.** All exterior signs must be flood lit, wood or brass, or internally lit and in a color compatible with that of the color scheme of the building (fluorescent colors are not acceptable). Sign detailing and decorative work should be consistent with the architectural detailing of the structure. Unlighted signs are permissible.

4.6.3 Mediterranean Theme Zone. The Mediterranean Theme Architectural Treatment Zone is established along El Camino Real to reflect the historic character of the area and the mixture of Mission Style, Spanish Eclectic and Monterey Style buildings which are generally found in this area.

Design Guidelines. The following design guidelines are set forth below, and demonstrated in Figure 4.6, Mediterranean Theme Prototype:

1. **Roof Treatment.** A low-pitched roof shall be provided on which there is little eave treatment or minimal overhang at the roof wall junction. A wide-eaved overhang may be provided such as typical of the Mission Style; it should be open and not boxed. Roof materials should be shingle or tile.
2. **Facades.** Wall cladding should be either stucco, brick or board and batten wood with different cladding materials on the first and second stories permitted. Use of second story balconies is encouraged either overhanging the lower story and covered by their principal roof or set in over a portion of the first floor. Use of paired casement windows and false shutters with minimal or decorative window detailing is appropriate.
3. **Porches and Entry Ways.** Entrances may include arcaded entry porches or ground level doorways with simple low relief ornaments and door surrounds.
4. **Signage.** Exterior signs may be wood, stucco or tile as consistent with the building's wall treatment and must be either flood lit or unlighted. The color should be shades of earthtones, dark shades of primary color, or other hues compatible with that of the color scheme of the building (fluorescent colors are not acceptable). Sign detailing and decorative work should be consistent with the architectural detailing of the structure.

4.6.4 Mixed Architectural Theme Zone. The Mixed Architectural Theme Zone is established for all areas east of El Camino Real. This mixed zone is established to allow for a wide variety of architectural themes, yet to provide for guidelines which would be consistent and complementary to the Mediterranean and Wood Residential Theme Zones within the rest

4.6 ARCHITECTURAL THEME AND TREATMENT OBJECTIVE

A distinct architectural image for the Downtown should be based on 8 mixed theme of building styles derived from the architectural heritage of Downtown Belmont. Creative architectural design should be encouraged to utilize the historic forms in innovative and attractive ways.

ARCHITECTURAL THEME AND APPEARANCE POLICIES:

4.6.1 Architectural Theme Zone Policy. Architectural theme zones are established within the Downtown to maintain a cohesive architectural image which reflects the heritage of Belmont and the types of buildings which are currently being built within the downtown, and ensure a compatible and united yet diverse building theme and style. These zones include a wood residential zone in the area at the base of the western hills and Village Center, a Mediterranean theme zone along El Camino Real including the area and a mixed theme zone of both styles in the area east of El Camino Real as shown in the Architectural Theme Zones Map, Figure 4.4.

4.6.2 The Wood Residential Theme Zone. The wood residential style is expected to govern the development of residential, office and commercial buildings yet retain a character associated with the heritage of wood framed and clad buildings in both the old Downtown as well as the residential areas of the City. Established styles range from Italianate to Queen Anne Victorian, Stick and Shingle Style as well as Bungalow Craftsman Style. Each of these styles when taken together has characteristic features associated with the detailing of roofs, the detailing of the sides and facades of buildings, including window and doorway ornamentation, as well as the first floor and building/ground relationship.

Design Guidelines. The following design guidelines are set forth; and demonstrated in Figure 4.5, Wood Residential Prototype.

- 1. Roof Features and Treatment.** Roofs shall be predominantly steeply pitched including a variety of roof types such as hipped roof with cross gables, front gabled roofs with cross gables, side gabled roofs, cross gabled roof or gambrel roof. Eaves shall be detailed whether unenclosed overhangs with decorative beams and braces or boxed and enclosed with molding and accents. Roofs may be multi-level and may include dormers ranging from gabled, hipped, curved, eyebrow, arched, pedimented or shed forms.
- 2. Facade and Wall Treatment.** Facades should be generally asymmetrical and employ a variety of devices for avoiding flat wall surfaces including irregularities in ground plane, use of frequent bay windows, wall insets or projections, and changes in the horizontal continuity of the wall plane. Devices to break up the continuity of the wall plane elevation include overhanging gables in upper stories as well as projecting wall shapes and dormers. Wall materials should be shingle or clapboard or board siding and should be applied in consistent patterns of detailing and decorative wood window surrounds can be simple or

of the Downtown.

Design Guidelines. The design guidelines from the Mediterranean and/or Wood Residential Theme Zones shall apply to the Mixed Architectural Zone.

4.6.5 Transitional Areas. Small, individual developments outside of the Village Center will sometimes lie at the border of two theme zones. In these cases, development may be designed with attributes of both districts to avoid a harsh contrast of architectural styles.

4.7 SITE PLANNING AND DESIGN

Policies and guidelines dealing with the siting layout and configuration of buildings on a development site, building orientation to the streetscape, pedestrian areas and parking facilities, on-site open space and landscape buffers provide specific guidance as to how the urban design goals and objectives may be implemented.

4.7 SITE PLANNING AND DESIGN OBJECTIVE.

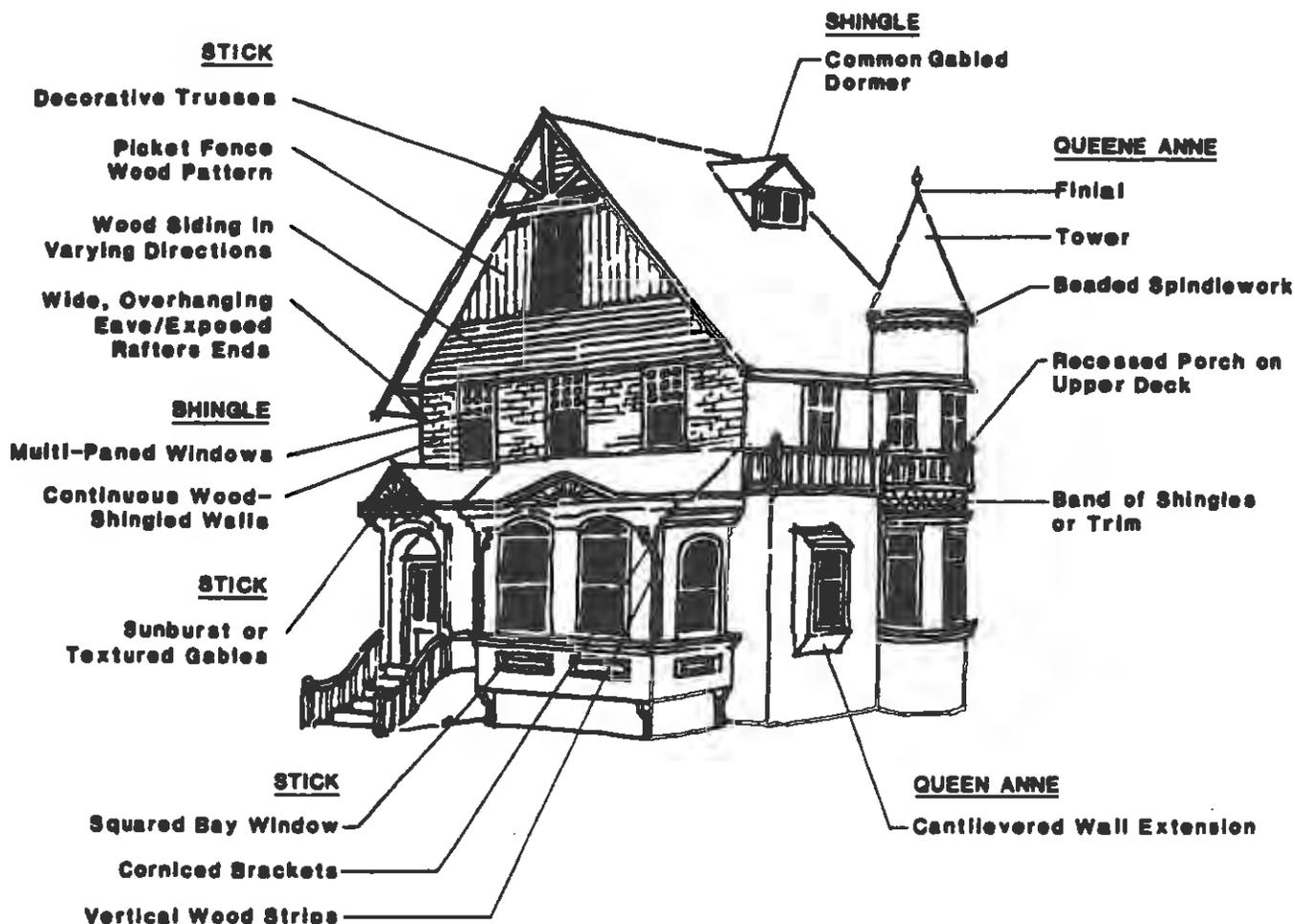
Creative site and building design should be promoted to achieve architectural and land use intensification goals of the Plan, while ensuring efficiency in automobile access and parking, provision for on-site landscaping and a high-quality site appearance.

POLICIES:

4.7.1 Building Grouping and Orientation Policy. Individual and groups of buildings shall be oriented to the street conforming to the streetwall policy of the building line and frontage policy plan and shall create an interesting appearance. Where larger parcel development is proposed, buildings shall be grouped to create convenient pedestrian access to buildings and to minimize walking distance between buildings and parking areas. Building arrangements should also form shared open spaces such as courtyards or lawn areas. A varied building height and roofscape is desirable for groups of buildings and very large single buildings to provide architectural interest and compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

4.7.2 Conservation of On-site Features Policy. Existing mature trees should be saved and incorporated into a site plan where possible, especially where visually significant or expected to be long lived.

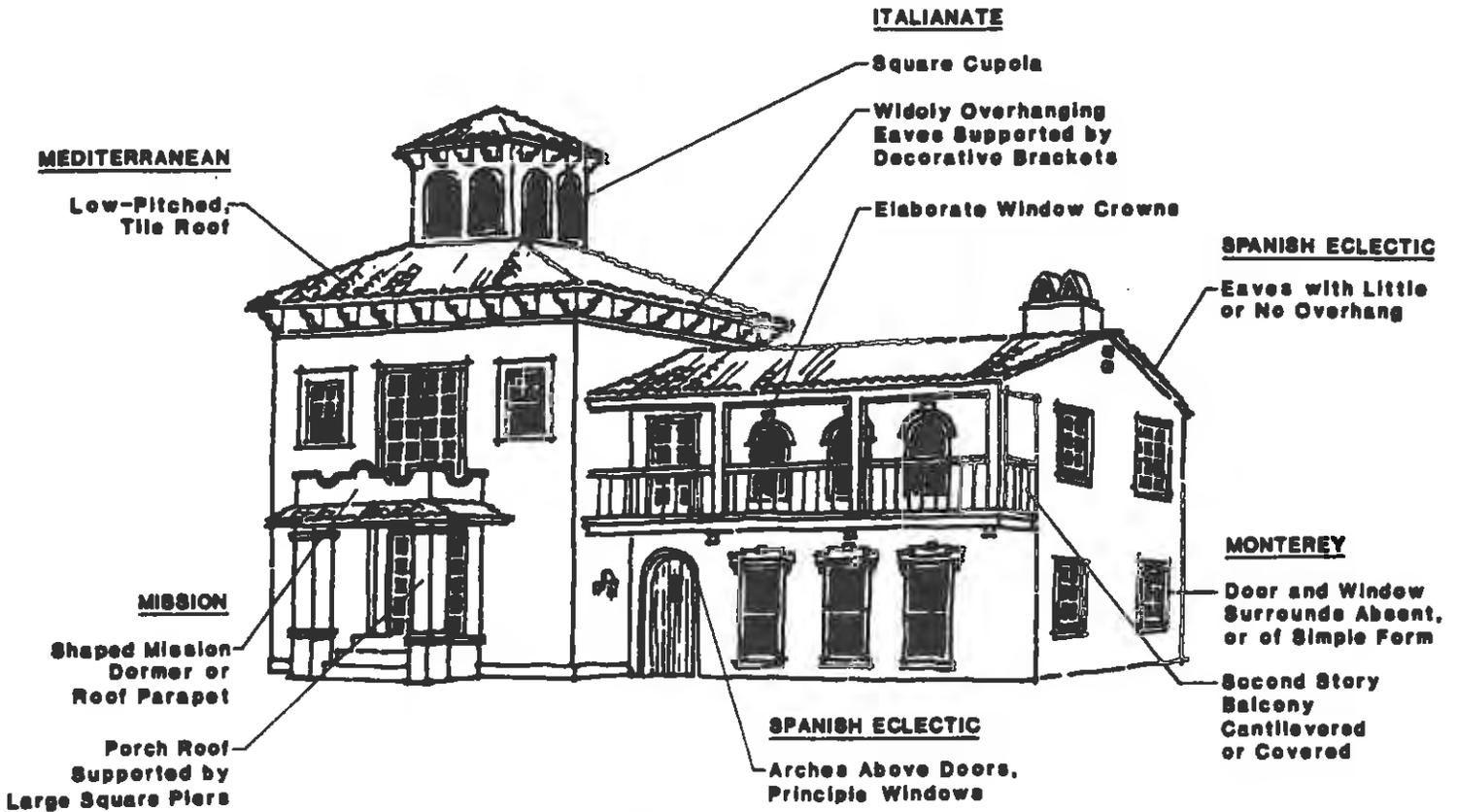
WOOD RESIDENTIAL THEME PROTOTYPE



This architectural prototype is intended to serve as an example of the variety of detail treatments available within the Queen Anne, Stick, and Shingle styles. The sketch alone should not serve as a model for future architectural design. Building designs should be judged on an individual basis when a blending of styles has been proposed within the Wood Residential Theme Zone. Different styles should be "meshed" in an appropriate and aesthetically pleasing manner.

Figure 4.5

MEDITERRANEAN THEME PROTOTYPE



This architectural prototype is intended to serve as an example of the variety of detail treatments available within the Mission, Spanish Eclectic, Monterey and Italianate styles. The sketch alone should not serve as a model for future architectural design. Building designs should be judged on an individual basis when a blending of styles has been proposed within the Mediterranean Theme Zone. Different styles should be "meshed" in an appropriate and aesthetically pleasing manner.

4.7.3 On-site Landscape and Site Appearance Policy. A varied and rich palette of plant materials emphasizing flowering ground covers, shrubs and incorporated into the landscaped areas of new development.

Design Guidelines. The following design guidelines should apply to the treatment of landscape buffers, parking lot islands, streetscape/landscape frontage, on-site open space and common areas.

1. Parking areas shall be shaded by round-headed canopy trees which shield heat gain in the parking lot while allowing flow through of cross breezes. One 15-gallon tree shall be provided for every 3 parking spaces.
2. Landscape and Site Appearance. All development shall be landscaped in a way that is both aesthetic and functional. Landscape plans prepared by a licensed landscape architect shall be required for all projects. The following standards shall be met:
 - a. Areas shall be large enough to ensure the survival of planted material.
 - b. Drought tolerant plants shall be used wherever possible.
 - c. Lighting shall be adequate to illuminate pedestrian and parking areas. All pedestrian walks shall be lit if nighttime activity is anticipated for a particular building.
 - d. Light sources should be shielded to reflect onto the ground, and not onto adjacent streets or properties.
 - e. Where possible, lighting shall be integrated with the architectural detailing of a building. Pad-mounted transformers shall be integrated with the architecture of buildings, or screened from view with landscape materials or fencing.
 - g. All utilities shall be undergrounded.

4.7.4 On-site Parking Design Policy. Parking areas should be confined to the rear or center of development blocks to allow full streetwall development of a building. Access to parking areas should be confined to entrance alleys on side streets or from rear streets and only permitted along streetwall frontages where alternate access cannot be provided. Curb cuts along arterials and important traffic collectors shall be minimized.

Design Guidelines. The following design guidelines are intended to guide the orientation, appearance and pedestrian accessibility of on-site surface parking areas. Parking space requirements are contained in the Land Use Element and minimum design requirements provided for in the City Zoning Code. Landscape requirements are provided for under On-site Landscape Improvement Policy.

1. **Parking lots shall be screened from adjacent sidewalk and street areas by a medium sized wall, 4-½ feet in height, which is architecturally detailed and clad in materials which are consistent with and reflect the design theme of the buildings they serve. A minimum 2-foot planting landscape area shall be included between the sidewalk and the wall to allow for shrub and vine plantings. This requirement may be modified if necessary to permit optimum parking lot layout and if provisions are made to permit pocket planting of vines. Landscape berming may be substituted for wall screens where deemed appropriate and consistent with the intent of screening.**
2. **Entrances to parking lots contained by wall screens shall continue the design treatment of the wall and shall include a change of wall height, decorative pilasters, ornamental portal structures such as archways pergola or the like. Entrances should be enhanced with landscape materials and lighting.**
3. **Parking lot lighting should include a combination of pole-mounted illuminaires not to exceed 25 feet in height which are spaced appropriately to provide safety to users. Light fixtures should downcast light so as to protect adjacent uses from glare. Within parking areas pedestrian ways should be illuminated with lower-scaled light fixtures (pole or wall mounted) approximately 10 to 2 feet in height which create a pedestrian scale.**

5.0 Land Use Element

5.0 LAND USE ELEMENT

5.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Land Use Element provides a guide for future land development within the Downtown. It insures a mix of land uses which will be complementary to and compatible with the Village Center, and it maintains the Downtown's role as the center of business and shopping activity in Belmont. This element focuses on those policies pertinent to the location of new development and redevelopment, the accommodation of various types of commercial and residential uses, and regulations regarding building intensities, landscaping, parking, and site development. It is directly related to both the Circulation and Urban Design Elements of this Plan, as each element reinforces the policies of the other elements.

5.2 LAND USE PLANNING AS A VEHICLE FOR DIRECTING FUTURE GROWTH

5.2.1 Improving on a Mixed Use Downtown District

The Downtown Planning Area is the center of commercial activity for the City of Belmont. Retail and service commercial uses are the predominant occupants of the downtown, accounting for over 50% of the building space within the Planning Area. Interspersed within this downtown retail district are a compliment of financial, real estate, professional and medical offices which account for approximately 20% of the building space, while light industrial uses comprise approximately 10% of the total planning area floor space. At the outer boundaries of the downtown, single family and multi-family residential neighborhoods provide for approximately 100 dwelling units.

These complimentary types of land uses provide for a relatively well balanced central business district, although the arrangement of these uses within the downtown often appears haphazard or without an overall logic. The challenge for the land use plan is to improve on this mixed use district by defining an overall logic, or organization of land uses.

Complementary Commercial Districts

As defined in Chapter 3.0, the Village Center is intended to act as the community focal point, or the center of commercial, entertainment and social activity. The relationship of the surrounding land use should complement the retail and community-focal-point function of the Village Center, and continue the existing mix of retail, office and residential space uses. Although much of the space which currently surrounds the Village Center has already been developed, it has not been built at intensities which are able to maximize the economic potential of each parcel. Therefore, private redevelopment efforts, remodelling and business expansion could reasonably be anticipated.

Continued Presence of Older Service Commercial Areas

Downtown Belmont also serves a vital role in providing for the service commercial needs of the community and the traveling public. A necessary element of land use planning in downtown is to recognize this role, and continue the presence of service commercial and auto-dependent uses, particularly along the major roadway corridors of Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real. The existing character of the service commercial district on the east side of the El Camino Real corridor should be maintained, while encouraging modest growth and an improved visual appearance.

Conserving Residential Neighborhoods

Traditionally, the City of Belmont has provided for approximately 6% of the housing needs of the southern and central portions of San Mateo County. Existing single family and multi-family residential neighborhoods, which ring the outer perimeter of the Downtown Planning Area, play a vital role in supplying housing for this ever-expanding population. It is important that these neighborhoods be preserved within the downtown. Additionally, as traffic congestion continues to be a major influence on the quality of life throughout the Bay Area, opportunities for providing housing within walking distance from the work place, shopping districts, and providers of community services should be encouraged. Mixed use projects, which combine ground floor commercial use with second and third floor residential uses are an excellent technique to accomplish this goal without forfeiting retail sales potential. Mixed use projects also have the potential to energize the downtown environment, interjecting people into an area which may otherwise lack activity during non-working hours.

Maintaining a Public Presence

There has been continued discussion within Belmont of a relocation or consolidation of city administrative offices. Currently, City Hall and the main administrative offices are located on Fifth Avenue at Broadway; the Police Department and Parks and Leisure Services Departments are located in Twin Pines Park west of Sixth Avenue, and outside of the Downtown Planning Area; and the Engineering and Public Works Offices are on Sem Lane east of U.S. 101, considerably outside the Downtown. The City Hall and other public agency offices are an integral component in downtown land use, and while consolidation is desirable, a continued public presence within the Downtown should be maintained.

5.2.2 Balancing Future Growth Against the Capacity of the Roadway Infrastructure

The Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real Roadways function as important corridors for the movement of traffic on a regional scale by linking to major highways and adjacent communities, as well on a local scale by providing access and circulation to downtown land uses. As more thoroughly described within the Transportation Element of this Plan, each of these corridors are currently operating at levels which exceed their designed capacity. Clearly, continued growth within the entire region will exacerbate this problem on the regional scale, driving the need for

long-term improvements to one or both of these corridors. These long-term improvements are extremely expensive and beyond the City's current financial capabilities.

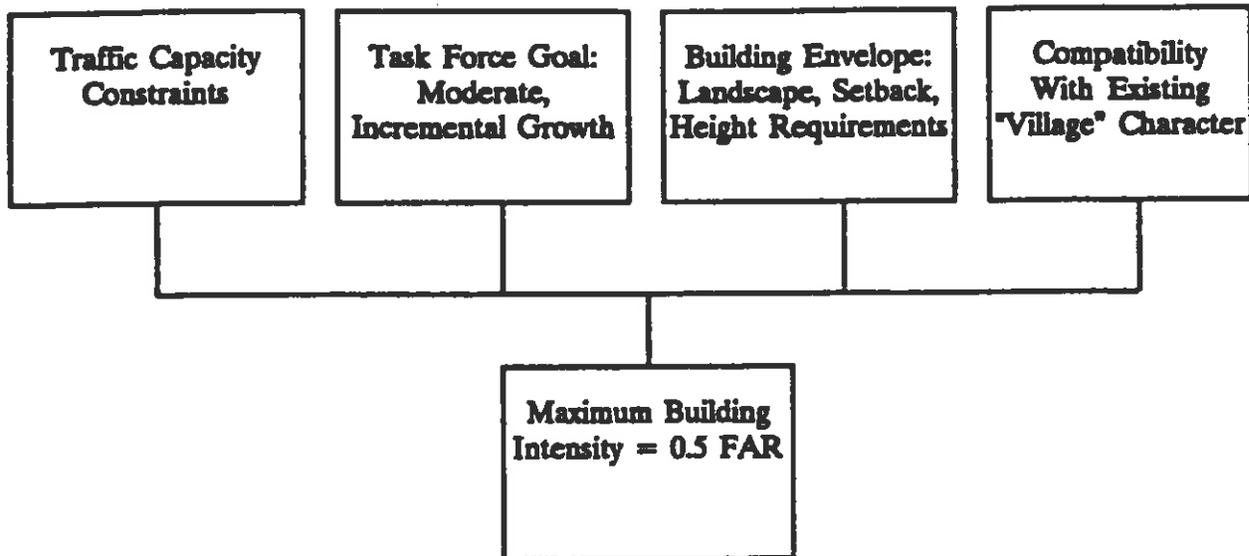
However, on the local scale the City does have an opportunity to make a positive contribution to this growing traffic congestion problem. An alternative method to increasing the capacity of roadways to accommodate traffic demand is to reduce or minimize the traffic demand to more closely approximate the roadway capacity. Traffic demand (or generation) is directly correlated to the amount or size of land use development. The greater the amount of increased development, the greater the amount of increased traffic demand.

Under current zoning regulations, commercial space within the downtown area can be developed at intensities of as high as a 1.8 Floor Area Ratio (FAR). If the Downtown Planning Area were completely built-out at the current zoning intensities, it would result in an additional 520,000 square feet of commercial/office space, almost an 85% increase over the existing level. Such an increase in land development would have a major adverse impact on the roadway network, causing intersections throughout the planning area to fall well below acceptable conditions.

A reduction in the potential build-out intensities of land within the planning area can have a major positive impact on the service capabilities of the entire roadway network. While regional traffic flows will continue to overly impact the primary intersection of Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real, a significant reduction in the potential congestion of secondary intersections (those which provide access and circulation for downtown land uses) can be achieved

A reduction in the potential development intensity of commercial space in Downtown Belmont to a maximum floor area ratio of 0.5 would not only represent a major step towards mitigating traffic impacts, but would also ensure that future development would be similar in scale to the existing buildings within the planning area. While current zoning does allow for buildings with floor area ratios of up to 1.8, such intensities have not been realized due to parking, landscaping and height limit requirements. On-site parking requirements have been a major factor in determining building intensities within the Downtown, often requiring as much as 50% to 60% of the total lot area. Unless parking spaces are provided underground, the remaining land area has generally been able to accommodate building intensities of only 0.4 to 0.6 FAR. The results of these requirements has been the development of a relatively small-scaled, village-like downtown, as opposed to a highly urbanized, densely compacted central business district. This existing village character is the key to Belmont residents' image of their community. Indeed, the Citizens Downtown Task Force has identified that the overall goal of the Land Use Element shall be to encourage and promote a major change in the Downtown through the implementation of the Village Center, but that outside of the Village Center Area, changes in existing land use should be minor and incremental.

As demonstrated in the following graphic, the recommended reduction in allowable building intensities within the Downtown is based upon a combination of factors:



5.3 LAND USE GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICY MAP

5.3.1 Land Use Goal

Land use planning provides an opportunity for a community to express their hopes, expectations and goals with respect to social, economic and land development issues. A thorough planning process should respond to each of these issues through a consensus-building approach derived from input from the citizens, land-owners and developers of the community. This Specific Plan for downtown Belmont relies upon the community consensus-building approach begun in early 1986 for the preparation of the Preliminary Belmont Downtown Concept (Amphion Environmental, 1986), enhanced through the Belmont Market Analysis (EPS, 1987), and continued by The Planning Collaborative, Inc., through the public workshop meetings of the Belmont Citizens Downtown Task Force.

This process has resulted in the identification of an overall land use goal for the downtown, as well as several social, economic, and design objectives by which to accomplish this goal. This section sets forth the goal for land use and describes the intent of the land use policies.

GOAL:

THE VILLAGE CENTER ELEMENT OF THIS PLAN SHOULD REPRESENT THE SINGLE MAJOR CHANGE OR MODIFICATION TO THE EXISTING LAND USE WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN. OUTSIDE OF THE VILLAGE CENTER DISTRICT, LAND USE POLICIES SHOULD ALLOW FOR AN INCREMENTAL EXPANSION OF RETAIL OFFICE AND RESIDENTIAL USES BUT SHOULD NOT RESULT IN A MAJOR CHANGE TO THE EXISTING CHARACTER OR INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT.

5.3.2 Land Use Objectives

The following objectives describe the overall program for future commercial and residential development to accomplish the land use goal.

1. General Commercial Objective

Recognize and maintain the existing mix of retail and office space uses within the commercial area west of El Camino Real between Ralston and O'Neill Avenues as a compliment to the Village Center and encourage an expansion of retail use on Waltermire Street west of El Camino Real.

2. Mixed Commercial/Residential Objective

Provide opportunities for mixed use development to simultaneously expand the community's tax base, stimulate redevelopment efforts, and address the growing housing needs within the downtown at select locations both north and south of the Village Center.

3. Highway Commercial Objective

Recognize and maintain the function of auto-dependent land uses along the Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real corridors.

4. Service Commercial Objective

Continue the presence of the older service commercial district on the east side of El Camino Real, particularly on those parcels with frontage along Old County Road.

5. Low Density Residential Objective

Preserve the character of established low density residential neighborhoods in the southwestern portion of the downtown.

6. High Density Residential Objective

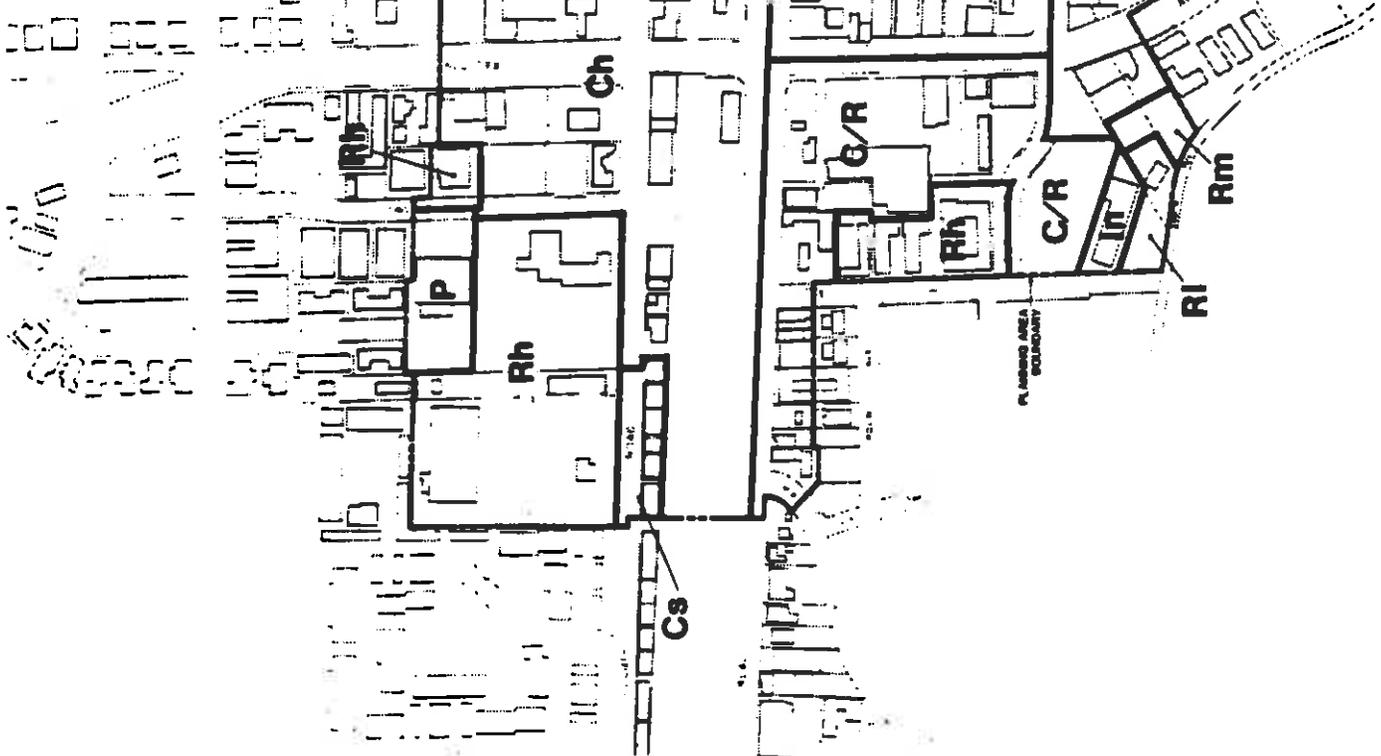
Provide greater opportunities to meet the needs of the different lifestyles and incomes of the people who wish to live within the community at locations adjacent to already established multi-family residential neighborhoods.

5.3.3 Land Use Policy Map

The Land Use Policy Map (Figure 5.1) identifies the land use designations of this Specific Plan. These designations are intended to allow for the development of the Village Center concept, to encourage and enhance opportunities for redevelopment and revitalization, and to carry-out the objectives of the Plan.

LAND USE POLICY MAP

Rh	RESIDENTIAL - HIGH DENSITY	Ch	COMMERCIAL - HIGHWAY
Rim	RESIDENTIAL - MEDIUM DENSITY	Cg	COMMERCIAL - GENERAL
RI	RESIDENTIAL - LOW DENSITY	Cs	COMMERCIAL - SERVICE
C/R	COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL MIX	In	INSTITUTIONAL
CBD	CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT	P	PUBLIC



5.7

BELMONT DOWNTOWN
 SPECIFIC PLAN
 CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA



Figure 5.1

5.4 GENERAL COMMERCIAL LAND USE POLICIES

GENERAL COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVE:

RECOGNIZE AND MAINTAIN THE EXISTING MIX OF RETAIL AND OFFICE SPACE USES WITHIN THE COMMERCIAL AREA WEST OF EL CAMINO REAL BETWEEN RALSTON AND O'NEILL AVENUES AS A COMPLIMENT TO THE VILLAGE CENTER, AND ENCOURAGE AN EXPANSION OF COMMERCIAL USE ON WALTERMIRE STREET WEST OF EL CAMINO REAL BY PROVIDING A RELIEF OF PARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR EXISTING PARCELS.

GENERAL COMMERCIAL POLICIES

5.4.1 Location Policy. The General Commercial District shall be defined as those blocks between Ralston Avenue, El Camino Real, O'Neill Avenue, and Twin Pines Park, exclusive of the Village Center District, as shown on the Land Use Map Figure 5.1.

Guideline. The General Commercial District is intended to provide a ring of complementary commercial land use encircling the Village Center to the north, west and east. This district generally complies with the definition of the Central Business District from the current General Plan.

5.4.2 Allowed Land Use Policy. The General Commercial District shall contain a mix of retail, office, government and recreational uses.

Guideline. All uses shall be complementary to and may include those uses designated for the Village Center.

5.4.3 Development Intensity Policy. The maximum allowable floor area ratio within the General Commercial District shall be 0.5.

Guideline. Given that the existing traffic condition within the downtown area is congested beyond acceptable conditions, and that any new development within the downtown would contribute additional traffic to this unacceptable condition, new commercial development should be limited to a decrease in the existing FAR from 1.2 to 0.5. This decreased FAR would result in a reduction of vehicle trips generated by the buildout of the General Commercial District parcels.

According to existing zoning ordinances applicable within the General Commercial District as well as the changes to those ordinances recommended by the Plan, parking, landscaping and height requirements limit the potential buildout of parcels. The maximum FAR of 0.5 permitted

under this Plan would correspond to the actual potential buildout attainable under the parking, landscaping and height requirements of this Plan.

5.4.4 Building Height Policy. The maximum building height in the General Commercial District shall be three stories. Buildings with frontage along El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue shall have a maximum two story streetwall to maintain and enhance the views of Belmont Hills, consistent with the Building Height Policy 4.5.2 of the Urban Design Element of this Plan.

5.4.5 Parking Policy. Parking facilities shall be provided as required or permitted as per Table 6.5 of this Plan.

Guideline. As existing residential structures on Waltermire Street and O'Neill Avenue are converted over time to commercial use, relief from the existing requirement of 4 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of building should be allowed. This relief would enable these existing structures to be converted to commercial uses as desired.

5.4.6 Landscaping Policy. Landscaping within the General Commercial District shall enhance the pedestrian-orientation of the downtown. Planted areas and street trees shall be located adjacent to or within pedestrian walkways and corridors.

Guideline. A range of between 10% and 15% of the gross site area should be planted and landscaped. The 15% landscaping requirement should be encouraged, although flexibility to accommodate unique circumstances should be allowed such as the preservation and/or planting of large trees.

5.4.7 Open Space Policy. The downtown area shall be connected by a landscaped pedestrian corridor to the Twin Pines Park.

Guideline. Landscaping of this corridor should be similar in nature to the landscaping within the park itself to provide for a continuity leading to the downtown.

5.5 MIXED COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

MIXED COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL OBJECTIVE:

CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO SIMULTANEOUSLY EXPAND THE COMMUNITY'S TAX BASE, STIMULATE REDEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, AND ADDRESS THE GROWING HOUSING NEEDS WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN AT SELECT LOCATIONS BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH OF THE VILLAGE CENTER.

MIXED COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

5.5.1 Location Policy. Mixed commercial/residential districts shall be located to the north and south of the Village Center on the west side of the El Camino Real as shown on the Land Use Map, Figure 5.1.

Guideline. These locations will provide opportunities for residential development close to shopping and employment environments. Mixed commercial/residential districts shall also be provided on the east side of El Camino Real, on certain lots with frontage on Eimer Street as shown on the Land Use Map, Figure 5.1. This designation will allow for the continuation of existing commercial uses, but provides, incentives, for redevelopment as residential use.

5.5.2 Permitted Use Policy. The commercial/residential district shall contain a mix of public, retail office, recreational and high density residential uses.

Guideline. Commercial uses are preferred on ground floor locations. Residential uses may occur on the ground floor, although the preferred plan would be to locate residential uses above ground floor commercial uses.

5.5.3 Development Intensity Policy. General commercial uses may be developed to a maximum floor area ratio of 0.5. Residential development may be high density to provide the greatest opportunity for affordable units, and the types of units which may be most desirable for senior citizen housing. Public uses, such as the City Hall, may be developed to a maximum floor area ratio of 1.00. Live/work residential developments are permitted at a maximum density of 30 units per acre and to a maximum floor area ratio of 1.2.

Guideline. High density residential uses may be developed to a maximum floor area ratio of 1.2, with a maximum density of 30 units per gross acre.

Combined commercial/residential uses may be developed to a maximum floor area ratio of 1.5 and a maximum residential density of 30 units per gross acre, provided the commercial portion of a mixed use project has a maximum floor area ratio of 0.5 and occupies the ground floor only, and the residential portion of a mixed use project has a maximum floor area ratio of 1.0 and occupies second and/or third floors only.

This policy and guideline assumes that parking will be provided in structure.

5.5.4 Lot Size Policy. The assembling only of existing small parcels shall be encouraged, and further subdivision of existing lot size (which might hamper opportunities for providing mixed use projects) shall be discouraged.

Guideline. A minimum lot size of 7,200 square feet could accommodate most existing parcels within this district, yet would require the assembly of a minimum of three of the small (2,400 square foot) lots in the northern portion of the planning area for redevelopment purposes.

5.5.6 Street Frontage Policy Mixed use developments shall face towards the street rather than fitting sideways on a narrow parcel.

Guideline. A minimum street frontage of 72 feet would allow for parcels with dimensions of 72 feet by 100 feet, sufficient to accommodate forward facing buildings.

5.5.7 Building Height Policy. The maximum permissible height shall be 3 stories for buildings on the west side of El Camino Real. Maximum heights within Commercial/Residential districts on the east side of El Camino Real shall be 4 stories. Buildings along El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue shall have a maximum 2 story streetwall to maintain and enhance the views of Belmont Hills, consistent with the Building Height Policy 4.5.2 of the Urban Design Element.

5.5.8 Parking Policy. Parking spaces shall be provided for in accordance with Table 6.5 of this Plan.

Guideline. Parking should be located at the rear of parcels whenever possible. The maximum buildout intensities of this district assume the provision of underground parking to accommodate parking demand on-site.

5.5.9 Landscaping Policy. Landscaping shall be utilized to enhance the aesthetic environment of the Downtown. Landscaping requirements shall be dependent upon the types of uses proposed in a mixed use district.

Guideline. Residential developments should provide a minimum of 300 square feet of yard area for each unit located on the ground floor, and an additional 150 square feet of yard for each unit located above the ground floor.

Commercial projects should provide landscaped yards equal in size to 15% of the gross site area.

Mixed commercial/residential projects should provide landscaped open areas equal to 10% of the total gross floor area of the combined uses, or 15% of the gross site area, whichever provides the greatest amount of landscaped open area.

5.6 HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL POLICIES

HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVE:

RECOGNIZE AND MAINTAIN THE FUNCTION OF AUTO DEPENDENT LAND USES ALONG THE RALSTON AVENUE AND EL CAMINO REAL CORRIDORS.

HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL POLICIES

5.6.1 Location Policy. The Highway Commercial District shall pertain to those parcels with frontage along the east side of El Camino Real and with frontage along Ralston Avenue east of El Camino Real (see Figure 5.1).

Guideline. Both El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue function as regional arterials, and uses which depend on such traffic for customers are appropriate for these areas.

5.6.2 Permitted Use Policy. Commercial uses within the Highway Commercial District shall primarily be those which supply commodities or provide services to meet the needs of the community and the traveling public; such as service stations and drive-thru eating and banking establishments.

Guideline. Uses which are permitted within the General Commercial District should also be permitted within the Highway Commercial District. Residential development, consistent with the standards for high density residential development as established by this Plan, should be permitted as a conditional use within the Highway Commercial District.

5.6.3 Building Intensity Policy. Commercial uses may be developed to a maximum floor area ratio of 0.5.

Guideline. This buildout intensity is intended to be compatible with the capacity of the regional roadway network to absorb additional growth, and is also intended to promote the landscaping, parking and height limitations of this Plan.

5.6.4 Building Height Policy. The maximum building height within the Highway Commercial District shall be 3 stories. Buildings along El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue shall have a maximum 2-story streetwall consistent with the Building Height Policy 4.5.2 of the Urban Design Element to maintain and enhance the view of Belmont Hills.

5.6.5 Parking Policy. Parking facilities shall be provided as required or permitted on Table 6.5 of this Plan.

5.6.6 Landscaping Policy. Landscaping within the Highway Commercial District shall be utilized to break-up continuous "strip commercial" frontages, enhance the aesthetics of parking areas, and provide transitions into residential areas.

Guideline. A range between 10% and 15% of the gross site area should be planted and landscaped. The 15% landscaped requirement should be encouraged, but flexibility should be allowed for unique circumstances such as the preservation and planning of large (specimen sized) trees.

5.7 SERVICE COMMERCIAL POLICIES

SERVICE COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVE

CONTINUE THE PRESENCE OF THE OLDER SERVICE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT ON THE EAST SIDE OF EL CAMINO REAL, PARTICULARLY ON THOSE PARCELS WITH FRONTAGE ON OLD COUNTY ROAD.

SERVICE COMMERCIAL POLICIES

5.7.1 Location Policy. The Service Commercial District shall pertain to those parcels with frontage on Old County Road south of Ralston, and on parcels with frontage on O'Neill Avenue and Waltermire Street east of Old County Road, as shown on the Land Use Policy Map, Figure 5.1.

5.7.2 Permitted Use Policy. The primary uses allowed within the Service Commercial District shall be service and storage activities related to the residential and commercial functions of the City, such as business supplies, printing and publishing, storage and warehousing, and other similarly related service uses. High traffic generation uses such as dry cleaning and public laundries, food stores, liquor stores, drug stores, retail bakeries, and restaurants.

5.7.3 Conditional Use Policy. High traffic generation uses shall be considered conditional uses subject to individual review. The Belmont Zoning Ordinance requires that the hearing body consider the volume of traffic generated and the capacity of streets prior to approving a conditional use. The following uses should be added to the list of conditional uses and if street capacity is not sufficient to serve these higher traffic generating uses then the use should not be approved: dry cleaning and public laundries, food stores, liquor stores, drug stores, retail bakeries, and restaurants.

Guideline. Uses permitted within the General Commercial District should also be permitted within the Service Commercial District. Residential development should not be permitted within the Service Commercial District. Existing residential uses should be considered non-conforming uses, and should be subject to the requirements of Section 9.6 of the City Zoning Ordinance.

5.7.4 Development Intensity Policy. Service Commercial uses may be developed to a maximum floor area ratio of ~~0.5~~ **5**.

Guideline. This buildout intensity is intended to be compatible with the capacity of the regional roadway network to absorb additional growth, and is also intended to be compatible with the landscaping, parking and height limitations of this Plan.

5.7.5 Building Height Policy. The maximum building height shall be three stories.

5.7.6 Parking Policy. Parking facilities shall be provided as required or permitted on Table 6.5 of this Plan.

5.7.7 Landscaping Policy. Landscaping within the Service Commercial District shall be utilized to enhance the appearance of building frontages.

Guideline. A minimum of 10% of the gross site should be planted and landscaped.

5.8 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL OBJECTIVE:

PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF ESTABLISHED LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE SOUTHWEST PORTIONS OF THE PLANNING AREA.

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

5.8.1 Location Policy. The Low Density Residential District shall apply to those parcels located on the block between Fifth and Sixth Avenues south of O'Neill Avenue, the large parcel located at the western terminus of O'Neill Avenue adjacent to Twin Pines Park, and the small parcels located at the corner of South Road and Hill Street in the northwest corner of the Planning Area, as shown on the Land Use Plan, Figure 3.3.

5.8.2 Permitted Use Policy. The Low Density Residential District shall be devoted to single family residential development and accessory structures which are clearly related to single family dwellings. The high quality of the existing residential neighborhoods shall be preserved.

Guideline. Clustered townhouse development should be developed on the large parcel adjacent to the Twin Pines Park, provided that the intensity does not exceed that prescribed in Policy 5.8.3.

5.8.3 Development Intensity Policy. Residential development shall be permitted up to an intensity of 8 units per net acre (5,000 square foot lot minimum). One dwelling unit shall be permitted on each lot.

Guideline. Clustered townhouse development at densities up to 7 units per net acre should be permitted on the large parcel adjacent to Twin Pines Park. Clustering of units can preserve and protect scenic and open space resources and enhance access to the park.

5.8.4 Minimum Lot Size Policy. The minimum lot size shall be consistent with existing parcel sizes within this District.

Guideline. A minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet is consistent with existing parcels and the requirement of R-1A Zoning.

5.8.5 Setback Requirement Policy. Building setbacks of 15 feet front yard, 6 feet side yard, and 20 feet rear yard shall be provided and maintained to ensure privacy for residential units.

5.8.6 Lot Frontage Policy. The average lot width shall be 60 feet, and the minimum street frontage shall be 30 feet to prevent the creation of narrow parcels which would inhibit emergency access.

5.8.7 Building Height Policy. The maximum building height shall be 2 stories.

5.8.8 Parking Policy Off-street parking shall be provided in accordance with Table 6.5 of this Plan.

5.9 HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

PROVIDE GREATER OPPORTUNITY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE DIFFERENT LIFESTYLES AND INCOMES OF THE PEOPLE WHO WISH TO LIVE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AT LOCATIONS ADJACENT TO ALREADY ESTABLISHED MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

5.9.1 Location Policy. The High Density Residential District shall apply to those parcels in the northeast corner of the planning area, the parcel at the southwest corner of Elmer Street and Masonic, the series of parcels on the west of Elmer Street at Waltermire Avenue, and the series of parcels south of Hill Street, as shown in the Land Use Map, Figure 5.1.

5.9.2 Permitted Use Policy. The High Density Residential District shall be devoted to multi-family residential development and those accessory structures which are clearly related to multi-family dwellings.

Guideline. Contrary to existing zoning, single family residential development should not be allowed as a permitted use within the High Density Residential District. Affordable housing and

senior citizen housing within the downtown can most effectively be provided through high density development.

5.9.3 Development Intensity Policy. The maximum building intensity within the High Density Residential District shall be 30 housing units per net acre, and the maximum floor area ratio shall be 1.4.

5.9.4 Minimum Lot Size Policy. The minimum lot size within the High Density Residential District shall ensure that a minimum of 4 units could be developed on the lot under the building intensity policy 5.9.3 of this Plan. The consolidation of parcels along Elmer Street would be required if redevelopment were to take place.

Guideline. A minimum parcel size of 7,200 square feet could accommodate the development of 4 residential units plus the parking and landscaping requirements of this Plan.

5.9.5 Setback Requirement Policy. Setbacks shall be 15 feet front yard, 6 feet plus 2 additional feet for each story above 2 stories side yard, and 15 feet rear yard.

5.9.6 Frontage Policy. The average lot width shall be wide enough to encourage buildings to face towards the street rather than fitting sideways on a narrow parcel, thus preventing the occurrence of blank streetwalls.

Guideline. A minimum frontage of 72 feet would be sufficient to accommodate a forward facing building.

5.9.7 Building Height Policy. The maximum building height shall be 4 stories.

5.9.8 Parking Policy. Off-street parking shall be provided in accordance with Table 6.5 of this Plan.

5.9.9 Landscaping Policy. Landscaping within the High Density Residential District shall be utilized to improve the appearance of building facades and provide landscaped yard areas in front of and between buildings.

Guideline. A minimum of 300 square feet of open space for each dwelling unit on the ground floor, plus 150 square feet of open space area for each unit above the ground floor would provide for an aesthetically pleasing and useable open space area. The preservation or planting of large (specimen sized) trees should be encouraged.

6.0 Circulation and Transportation Element

6.0 CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

6.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Circulation and Transportation Element describes the facilities for the movement of people and goods within and through the Downtown area. It is related to the Land Use Element because it establishes the spatial characteristics of the transportation system; including streets, rail service, transit, and pedestrian facilities needed to serve the planned land uses. Transportation facilities occupy about 32 percent of the 80 acres within the downtown area.

This Circulation Element incorporates various changes to the existing City of Belmont General Plan. These include changes to some of the downtown street classifications, a set of interim improvements, and the discussion of a number of long term improvement projects that are intended to mitigate some of the current east-west travel constraints within the Ralston Avenue corridor.

6.2 DOWNTOWN TRAFFIC CIRCULATION AND LEVEL OF SERVICE REALITIES

6.2.1 Traffic Congestion Today

Downtown Belmont is served by two principal arterial streets: El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue. Most of the local and regional traffic which accesses the downtown use these roadways. While no precise analysis of the percentage of local versus regional traffic is available, TPC estimates that about 70 percent of the traffic on Ralston Avenue is through traffic going between the western portions of Ralston Avenue and U.S. 101. Along El Camino Real, the through traffic represents about 80 percent of the total traffic. The most critical intersection within the downtown is El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue. During peak periods, this intersection operates at Level of Service "F". Other critical intersections include: El Camino Real at Harbor Boulevard, Ralston Avenue at Sixth, Ralston Avenue at Old County Road and Ralston Avenue at Hiller Street. Congestion is caused by a number of factors including limited capacity within the El Camino Real corridor and on Ralston Avenue between Sixth Avenue and Elmer Street, and the interruption of east-west traffic created by Caltrans commute service. Six intersections were selected to establish the existing traffic levels of service within the downtown area. These were: 1) Ralston Avenue and Sixth Avenue; 2) Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real; 3) Ralston Avenue and Old County Road; 4) Ralston Avenue and Elmer; Ralston Avenue and Hiller; and 6) El Camino Real and Harbor.

Level of Service Methodologies

The tables that follow illustrate the existing levels of service within the downtown area. Two methods are available to determine levels of service. These are: 1) the Transportation Research Circular 212 - Interim Materials on Highway Capacity Method (the so called Circular 212 Planning Method) and 2) the 1985 Highway Capacity Manual - Operations Method. The Planning method determines the volume-to-capacity ratio for the intersection and assigns a letter grade for peak hour performance. The grades range from "A" to "F" with "A" being the highest level of service and "F" the worse. After the publication of the Circular 212 materials, research suggested that at level of service "E" and above, the values generated by the planning method did not adequately duplicate field conditions. Further, it was determined that delay rather than level of service best describes the performance of the intersections where the levels of service were worse than "E". A new methodology was developed and published as the 1985 Highway Capacity Manual. This method expresses intersection performance in terms of delay. The delay is expressed as the average number of seconds per vehicle experienced during the PM peak hour.

Table 6.1 expresses the levels of service at the six study intersections using the Circular 212 Planning Method. At Intersection #4, Ralston Avenue and Old County Road, the level of service is noted as "C". However, actual field conditions suggest that this intersection is operating at level of service "F". The discrepancy is due to the fact that the number of vehicles able to travel through this intersection is actually restricted by congestion at previous intersections. Therefore, the volume-to-capacity ratio represents the relationship between the number of vehicles able to move through the intersection divided by the capacity of the intersection. The Planning Method assumes that all intersections are isolated and do not effect the performance of adjacent intersections.

TABLE 6.1 EXISTING TRAFFIC CONDITIONS - CIRCULAR 212 PLANNING PM PEAK HOUR - LEVELS OF SERVICE

Intersection	Level of Service	V/C ratio ¹
1. El Camino Real/Harbor	F	(1.081)
2. Ralston/Sixth	E	(0.91)
3. El Camino Real/Ralston	E	(0.95)
4. Ralston/Old County Road	C	(0.73)
5. Ralston/Elmer	C	(0.73)
6. Ralston/Hiller	B	(0.69)

¹ V/C ratio = volume-to capacity ratio, the ratio of the number of vehicles being served by the intersection to the critical lane capacity of the intersection. For v/c ratios above .99, the ratio presents the demand-to-capacity ratio. The level of service is based upon the criteria defined for the Highway Capacity Manual Circular 212 Planning Method of intersection capacity analysis.

Table 6.2 illustrates the level of service using the 1985 Highway Capacity Manual - Delay method. Using the intersection of Old County Road and Ralston Avenue for comparative purposes, the delay calculated for this location suggests a level of service of "F" rather the "C" as determined by the planning methodology. Field observations support this result. Table 2 provides two measures of performance. These are: 1) the average number of seconds of delay that the vehicles entering the intersection will experience and 2) the percent of vehicles that will be stopped during the peak hour. Using the values of seconds of delay, a level of service letter designation is applied. By comparing the results of Tables 1 and 2, the impacts of the two level of service methods can be understood. Within Belmont, the 1985 Highway Capacity manual best describes the performance of the downtown intersections.

**TABLE 6.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS - 1985 HIGHWAY CAPACITY MANUAL
(OPERATIONS METHOD)
PM Peak Hour - Level of Service**

Intersection	Vehicle Delay	Avg. Level of Service¹	Stopped Vehicles²
1. El Camino Real/Harbor	61.8 Seconds	F	99
2. Ralston/Sixth	68.1 Seconds	F	100
3. El Camino Real/Ralston	69.5 Seconds	F	100
4. Ralston/Old County Road	136.4 Seconds	F	100
5. Ralston/Elmer	12 Seconds	B	73
6. Ralston/Hiller	17.4 Seconds	C	74

¹ The level of service based upon delay criteria as published in the 1985 Highway Capacity Manual Circular 209.

² Stopped vehicles refers to the average percentage of the vehicles in the various lanes that will have to stop either for red or at the end of a queue during the early part of green.

Studies were conducted to determine the average amount of time the traffic signals on Ralston Avenue at El Camino Real (Intersection #3) and Old County Road (Intersection #4) are preempted for the Caltrain service. Currently, 7 trains cross Ralston Avenue during the PM peak hour. These trains restrict the movement of traffic along Ralston Avenue. When trains access the Belmont Caltrain station (located just northerly of Ralston Avenue between Old County Road and El Camino Real), all eastbound and all westbound traffic movements across the railroad tracks are restricted. In total, traffic is restrained for about 11 minutes. This condition greatly

reduces the capacity within the circulation system and increases delays and queuing along Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real.

Along El Camino Real, the existing four travel lanes do not provide adequate capacity to handle peak hour loads. Further, the train service restricts the movement of traffic to and from Ralston Avenue during train interrupt cycles. These restrictions tend to queue traffic on El Camino Real.

6.2.2 What Tomorrow Could Be Like

TPC conducted several tests of future traffic within the downtown area. With the buildout of the area and provision of mitigation, the effect will be to increase the peak period from 1 and 1/2 hours to 2 and 1/2 hours. In other words, the time during which level of service "F" will be experienced within the critical downtown intersections would be extended by an additional hour. The projected demand to capacity ratio at El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue is estimated to change from 100 percent to 133 percent when the buildout of the downtown occurs. Moreover, there are plans to increase the frequency of the Caltrain service. The increase in service will further restrict traffic flows within the El Camino Real and Old County Road intersections on Ralston Avenue. Today, 52 trips are made by Caltrans. Potentially, if Caltrans was extended to the East Bay terminal, demand could reach 106 trains per day. While most of these trains would augment off-peak and midday service, the frequency of trains in the peak hour could double. Under this condition, for 36% or 22 minutes of the peak hour, the traffic along Ralston could be interrupted. The average vehicle delay could reach 240 seconds, or 4 minutes. The decrease in the service level noted above is generated by the change in traffic due to growth within the downtown only, no provision for traffic growth outside of the study area or as a result of other growth within Belmont or other portions of the Peninsula have been taken into account.

The practical way to view the projected levels of future traffic within the downtown requires an understanding of vehicle delay. Once an intersection reaches capacity, it can not serve additional vehicles. Therefore, at a volume-to-capacity ratio of 1.00 (or 100 percent), the intersection is saturated. With additional demand (projected volumes of traffic per hour above the intersections capacity), substantial delay is introduced and the peak hour traffic condition is extended into adjacent hours. In other words, when an intersection reaches capacity, the level of service is "F". With the additional demand of more traffic, the peak hour condition is not worsened. Rather the length of time, or peak period, that the congestion occurs is extended.

6.2.3 Mitigating Peak Period versus Peak Hour Traffic at Ralston and El Camino Real

Three options appear available for mitigating the intersection at El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue. These include: 1) widening El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue to 6 travel lanes; 2) grade separating portion of the Ralston Avenue traffic flows with the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks, and 3) grade separating the Southern Pacific tracks and Ralston Avenue. Each of these options provides specific benefits to the downtown intersections.

The widening of El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue produce the greatest level of service benefit under existing conditions. However because there is such a large unmet latent traffic demand within the system, such a widening would probably encourage increases in overall traffic within the circulation system, and thus result in no significant improvement in traffic level of service.

The grade separation of the east-west through movements along Ralston Avenue from the Southern Pacific railroad will substantially improve the travel for vehicles moving through the downtown on Ralston Avenue; however, the performance of the El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue intersection would not be substantially improved. This is because most of the existing traffic would not be diverted to the new undercrossing facility. Rather, all existing and most of the future traffic growth within the downtown would still use the El Camino Real/Ralston Avenue intersection.

6.3 CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND POLICY MAP

This section details the goals and policies related to the overall downtown circulation system. The General Plan Circulation Plan should be referenced for all of the policies that relate to the City of Belmont. Several of the existing General Plan policies have been incorporated into this Specific Plan relative to circulation issues.

6.3.1 Overall Circulation and Transportation Goals and Objectives:

This section provides a summary of the circulation and transportation system goals and objectives for the downtown area. Each basic objective is supported by specific policies which are detailed in subsequent sections of this chapter.

GOAL:

TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EXISTING CIRCULATION SYSTEM WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN CORE.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Circulation and Street Classification Objective: Establish a ranking of street types capable of serving varying levels of existing and future land use in a functional and safe manner.**

In keeping with policy of the existing General Plan, no new major thoroughfares are planned to serve the growth and development anticipated by the Downtown Plan. Modifications to the existing system will be primarily to maintain and improve existing

facilities in the foreseeable future to ensure safety and reasonable convenience of use. The existing street classification system will be maintained; however, Old County Road is proposed to be re-designated as an arterial throughout the downtown, and Flashner Lane is being eliminated from the street system within the downtown.

2. **Interim Improvement Objective: Enhance the circulation system within the short term to reduce delays, maintain safe and pleasant travel ways and improve access to downtown land uses, especially the Village Center.**

This objective recognizes that peak hour levels of service at Ralston and El Camino will remain at Level of Service "F", with other roadways and intersections generally achieving an LOS "D". Improvement of the service level at the intersection of Ralston and El Camino cannot be achieved without major investment in intersection improvements.

3. **Long Term Improvement Objective: Work towards a resolution of the long term traffic congestion within the downtown area in coordination with the development of the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way.**

The City of Belmont has a number of opportunities to achieve various levels of mitigation within the downtown area. These include the expenditure of significant levels of capital to solve traffic problems. Three concepts are presented in the circulation element for consideration. Each provides varying levels of benefit.

4. **Transit Service Objective: Promote and support expanded transit service to the downtown to reduce automobile congestion and facilitate desired levels of downtown development.**

The City needs to continue to support efforts for expanding bus and rail transit services within Belmont. The primary focus of this objective is to encourage the City to participate actively in the development of transit along the Caltrain corridor and to address the issue of grade separation of the railroad from the Ralston Avenue corridor.

5. **Downtown Parking Objective: Provide additional off-street parking in the Central Business District through Provision of adequate on-site facilities.**

Existing parking spaces within the Downtown are generally insufficient to accommodate existing demand. This Plan provides both short-term and long-term strategies for meeting this existing shortfall.

6.3.2 Circulation and Transportation Policy Map. The Circulation and Transportation Policy Map, Figure 6.1, sets forth the roadway designation for all roadways within the downtown planning area.

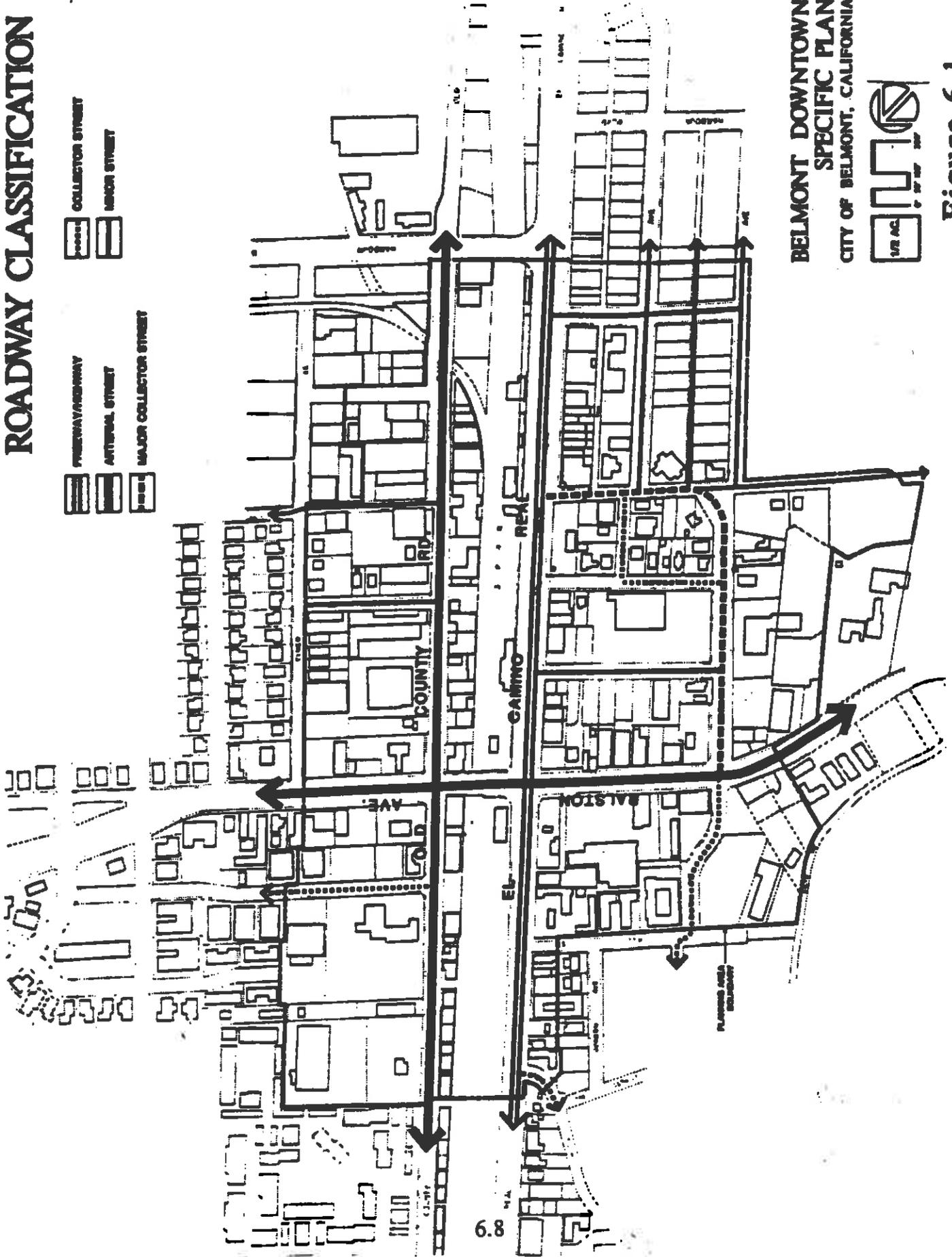
A policy description of roadway classifications is found in Section 6.4 of this Plan according to:

1. State Highway Policies
2. Arterial Street Policies
3. Major Collector Street Policies
4. Collector Street Policies
5. Minor Street Policies

Table 6.3, Street Classifications, shows the various proposed street classifications and recommended changes to the existing General Plan as required. While some of the streets have segments which are not within the downtown study area, all roadways are noted. Those streets not within the study area will require General Plan amendments to be consistent with this plan.

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION

-  FREEWAY/HIGHWAY
-  ARTERIAL STREET
-  MAJOR COLLECTOR STREET
-  COLLECTOR STREET
-  MINOR STREET



BELMONT DOWNTOWN
SPECIFIC PLAN
CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA



Figure 6.1

6.4 CIRCULATION AND STREET CLASSIFICATION POLICIES

The street system within Belmont consists of freeways, highways, arterials, major collectors, collectors and minor streets. The system is structured around arterial streets designed to carry large volumes of traffic. The arterials are fed by collector streets which collect traffic from minor streets within the downtown and surrounding districts. Within the downtown area, El Camino Real is a State maintained facility designated as State Route 82. Other streets within the downtown are either arterial, collector or minor roadway facilities.

OBJECTIVE:

Establish a ranking of street types capable of serving varying levels of existing and future land use in a functional and safe manner.

The following policies are depicted on the Circulation Policy Map, Figure 6.1, and are set forth herein to provide for the designation of roadways and the overall policy intent:

POLICIES:

6.4.1 State Highway Policy: El Camino Real is the designated state highway within the downtown planning area. The City shall continue discussions with the State to encourage improvements along El Camino Real including the addition of landscaped median strips and left-turn stacking lanes. Widening of El Camino Real shall be supported only when absolutely necessary based on traffic volumes and adequate plans to protect the properties along the roadway.

Guideline. El Camino Real (State Route 82) is a major intercity traffic carrier which parallels the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks. El Camino Real presently carries four lanes of traffic. No additional lanes are proposed as part of this Plan; however, an option for long term projects on El Camino Real is discussed. This Plan calls for the development of a landscaped median strip along El Camino with left turn stacking lanes at major intersections.

The development of the Village Center provides that ultimately the only northbound access from El Camino Real directly into the Village Center will occur at O'Neill with no northbound left turn lanes provided at either Emmett or Waltermire. With the full buildout of the downtown area, a new traffic signal is recommended at O'Neill and El Camino Real to provide reasonable access to and from the downtown core and El Camino Real without having to use the Ralston Avenue/El Camino Real intersection. This plan also supports efforts to improve the appearance of the El Camino right-of-way through landscaping, sign control and attention to the design of new and remodeled structures. Landscaping is especially needed along portions of the east side

of El Camino and in conjunction with the development of the few vacant parcels along the west side.

6.4.2 Arterial Street Policy: Arterial streets are 4 lane streets with controlled parking and restricted access to adjacent parcels. Within the downtown area, the designated arterial streets shall be Ralston Avenue, Old County Road (south of Ralston), and Harbor Boulevard (east of El Camino Real).

Guideline. Arterial streets comprise the major traffic carrier facilities within Belmont. They link residential, commercial and industrial areas with the U.S. 101 freeway and highway system. They also provide access to other transportation facilities. The following guidelines apply:

1. **Ralston Avenue.** This street is the only east-west arterial route in the Belmont downtown. It varies in width from 2 to 4 travel lanes. Its pavement width is between 48 and 64 feet, with right-of-way provided between 84 and 100 feet. It connects U.S. 101 with other regional routes, and State Route 82 within the Belmont downtown. Within the downtown Ralston is 4 lanes with turn lanes provided at Hiller Street, Old County Road, El Camino Real and Sixth Avenue. Traffic signals are provided at Hiller, Old County Road, El Camino Real and Sixth. The traffic signalization provided on Ralston at El Camino Real is integrated with the signal at Old County Road. When train service interrupts the signal by stopping traffic along Ralston Avenue, the system switches the traffic flows to north and southbound Old County Road and El Camino Real. Unfortunately, when the train gates are lifted, the signal system starts at the beginning of the controller program rather than with the last signal phase activated before the interrupt occurred. Thus, delays on Ralston Avenue may be even longer than necessary as traffic must wait for the appropriate signal to re-occur during the signal sequencing program.
2. **Old County Road.** Old County Road is a two-lane, north-south arterial serving residential, commercial and industrial development east of the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks. From Ralston Avenue south to Harbor Boulevard, it serves as an arterial and is so designated on the Plan. The street provides access to numerous parcels, driveways and entering-exiting traffic which restricts traffic flow and on-street parking.

Improvements needed to relieve existing and anticipated traffic congestion include increasing off-street parking and limiting access to the extent possible. If on-street parking were eliminated, the road could accommodate four traffic lanes. However, the present development pattern presents a formidable obstacle to providing off-street parking convenient to the various businesses.

This Plan calls for an upgraded roadway designation of Old County Road north of Ralston Avenue from a major collector to an arterial status. North of Ralston Avenue in San Mateo, a new grade separation is being constructed at Laurie Meadows. This improvement will divert portions of the existing traffic on El Camino Real to Old County Road. Therefore, some increase in north-south traffic is expected once the Laurie

Meadows undercrossing is opened. To facilitate the anticipated levels of traffic, Old County Road north of Ralston Avenue has been designated a major arterial. Both north and south of Ralston, Old County Road has an average curb-to-curb width of 64 feet with an 84 foot right-of-way. Currently, this portion of Old County Road does not meet the 4 lane with controlled access criteria of a major arterial.

3. Harbor Boulevard. This four-lane street with parking on both sides connects El Camino Real with the U.S. 101 Freeway. It carries traffic to and from the Harbor Industrial Park and has adequate capacity for existing and anticipated traffic volumes. The arterial designation refers to that portion of Harbor to the east of El Camino Real. Harbor has a pavement width of 75 feet with 100 feet of right-of-way provided for future expansion.

6.4.3 Major Collector Street Policy: The major collector streets are generally two-lane streets with controlled parking and restricted cross traffic. Existing major collector streets within the Belmont downtown area shall be Old County Road (north of Ralston), and portions of Sixth Avenue.

Guideline. Major collectors are designed to carry through traffic from local traffic generators (schools, employment and shopping centers) and minor streets to arterials. The following guidelines apply:

1. Old County Road. This roadway should be upgraded to arterial status to the north of Ralston Avenue. Currently this segment is designated as a major collector and has an average curb-to-curb width of 64 feet.
2. Sixth Avenue. The portion of Sixth Avenue south of Ralston to O'Neill, and the portion of O'Neill east of Sixth to El Camino Real should be designated as major collector streets. Currently, Sixth Avenue south of Ralston to O'Neill is designated as a major collector while O'Neill is a local street. The intent of this redesignation is to provide a major collector linkage between Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real via Sixth Avenue as an alternative to using Ralston Avenue.

6.4.4 Collector Street Policy: The collector streets within the downtown are Masonic Way, Waltermire Street, Emmett Street, and Middle Road. As part of the development of the Downtown Plan, Emmett Street and a portion of Waltermire Street shall be redesigned to discourage through traffic. Redesigned portions of these streets shall be incorporated into the parking and pedestrian circulation of adjoining public and private parking lots to maximum parking potential. Designs of parking, circulation, and pavement treatments shall be used to discourage motorists from using Emmett and Waltermire as a bypass to the Ralston/El Camino intersection.

Guideline. Collector streets carry traffic from a portion of a neighborhood or a particular traffic generator. Collectors are two-lane streets with characteristics similar to the major collectors except they carry less traffic.

6.4.5 Minor Street Policy: The minor streets within the downtown area shall include Furlong Street, Granada Street, O'Neill east of Old County Road, Wessex Way, 5th Avenue, 6th Avenue, Sunnyslope Avenue, Broadway, and Gordon Avenue.

Guideline. Minor streets provide access to abutting property. They are designed to discourage through traffic and are an important element in the community design providing a framework for building location. These streets occur in residential, commercial and adjacent to some industrial areas.

Flashner Lane shall be eliminated as a minor street. Flashner Lane currently serves private uses within the area north of Ralston Avenue between Sixth and El Camino Real. This roadway does not service other uses or provide continuity within the downtown circulation system. Therefore, Flashner Lane should be eliminated from the street system and any existing easements eliminated and reverted to the adjacent land owners.

6.4.6 Street Portions Outside the Planning Area Policy. Change the classification of selected streets outside the Downtown Planning Area to ensure the consistency between the Specific Plan and the General Plan.

Guideline. Portions of some of the streets noted above are not within the planning area, but do serve the downtown. These streets will need to have their classifications changed within the General Plan to make both this Specific Plan and General Plan consistent. The streets requiring General Plan amendments are: Cypress Avenue, Laurel Avenue, Sixth Avenue north of Ralston and Harbor Boulevard west of El Camino Real.

6.5 INTERIM IMPROVEMENT POLICIES

This section details a number of interim improvements which are directed at mitigating the effects of the development of the Village Center area as well as improving area-wide traffic service. The improvements represent the greatest level of improvement possible without the development of extensive mitigation. None preclude future long range improvement alternatives.

Traffic analysis has shown that a Level of Service "D" can be achieved generally within the downtown area except for the Ralston/El Camino intersection. While the existing condition along El Camino Real during peak hours requires extensive mitigation to provide level of service "D", the following improvements either maintain the existing condition or provide enhanced operation

at various downtown intersections. Table 6.4 details the improvements given for six locations within the downtown. The improvements are also shown on Figure 6.2.

OBJECTIVE:

Enhance the circulation system within the short term to reduce delays, maintain safe and pleasant travel ways and improve access to downtown land uses, especially the Village Center.

The following policies are set forth which specify required improvements:

POLICIES:

6.5.1 Sixth at Ralston Policy. A second left turn lane shall be added to the northbound approach of Sixth and a right turn lane to the southbound approach. Further, the signalization of the intersection shall be phasing on the approaches of Sixth Avenue.

Guideline. While the northbound dual left turn lanes can be accommodated within the existing curb lines, the southbound right turn lane requires the widening of Sixth Avenue. Specifically, the west curb will need to be moved about 14 feet to provide space for the new lane. Finally, parking on the west side of Sixth south of Ralston Avenue shall be maintained for at least 100 feet. The operation of this intersection is restricted because of inadequate capacity on the northbound and southbound approaches of Sixth Avenue.

6.5.2 Ralston between Sixth and El Camino Real Policy. A uniform curb line shall be provided between Sixth and El Camino Real. In addition, a median shall be added to Ralston to separate eastbound and westbound traffic. Further, a protected left turn bay shall be provided in the median for eastbound traffic accessing the shopping center on the north side of Ralston.

6.5.3 Sixth Avenue between Ralston and O'Neill Policy. This segment of Sixth Avenue shall be restriped as shown on Figure 6.2. In general, one travel lane in each direction shall be provided with left turn lanes at all intersections; at Sixth and Emmett, on the northbound approach, a single right turn lane, a through lane and a left and through-left turn lane. South of Waltermire, Sixth Avenue shall provide a single through lane in each direction and a two-way left turn in the center of the street.

Guideline. This improvement is necessary to provide clear access into the Village Center area and insure clear traffic lanes along Sixth Avenue south of Ralston.

6.5.4 O'Neill at El Camino Real Policy. At O'Neill and El Camino Real the eastbound approach shall be restriped to provide a separate left and right turn lane. No changes to the striping and capacity on El Camino Real is recommended.

Guideline. This intersection will provide direct access to the downtown area and Village Center. Sixth Avenue and O'Neill shall be upgraded to Major Collector status to encourage the use of these streets rather than using Ralston for traffic to and from Ralston west of the downtown. Caltrans has noted that if a traffic signal is warranted at O'Neill and El Camino Real it should be constructed. Preliminary traffic studies with the buildout of the Village Center suggest that a traffic signal is not warranted at this location. Once the Village Center is constructed and occupied, an additional traffic study of this intersection shall be conducted to determine if signalization is then warranted.

6.5.5 El Camino Real Policy. Raised median areas in the center of El Camino Real between Hill Street and Harbor Boulevard shall be constructed.

Guideline. These medians shall include planting areas and accommodate the existing left turn pockets along El Camino Real. In addition to upgrading the medians on El Camino Real, the plan calls for the construction of a protected parking area south of O'Neill on the west side of El Camino Real. To accommodate this improvement the easterly curb lane along El Camino must be narrowed. A 4 foot curb area between El Camino and the parking spaces is recommended.

6.5.6 Removal of Existing Parking Policy. Curb parking shall be eliminated on the east side of Sixth between Ralston and Emmett and on the west side from Waltermire northerly to a point mid-block between Emmett and Ralston Avenue.

Guideline. The removal of existing parking is necessary to facilitate the restriping of Sixth Avenue south of Ralston Avenue to Waltermire.

6.5.7 Signalize the intersection of Sixth Avenue and Emmett Street Policy. The intersection of Sixth Avenue and Emmett Street shall be signalized.

Guideline. This signal is necessary to manage traffic flow and improve peak hour traffic levels of service with the expansion of the Village Center.

6.5.8 Signalize the intersection of Old County Road and Masonic Policy. The intersection of Old County Road and Masonic shall be signalized.

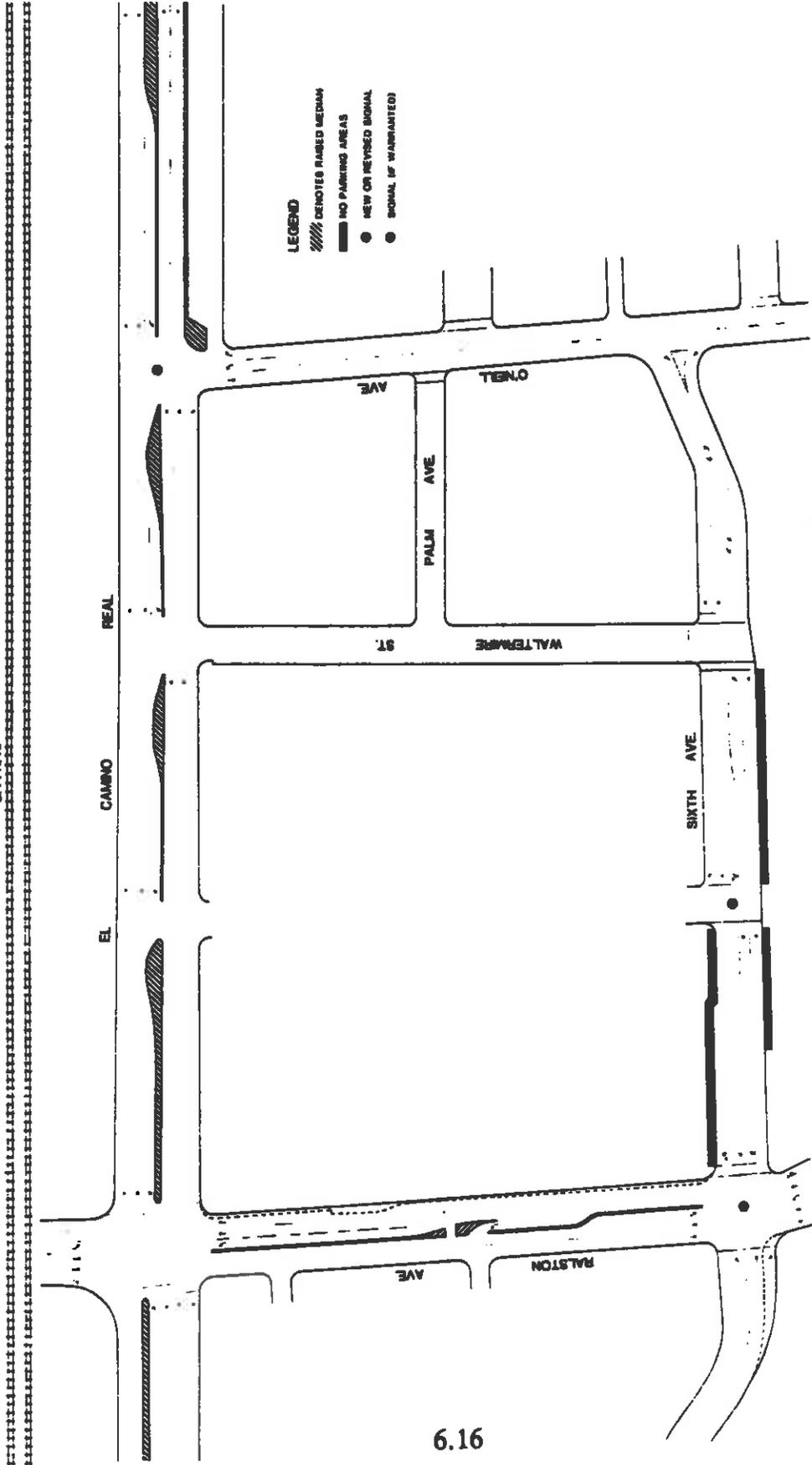
Guideline. This signal is necessary to manage traffic flows and improve the peak hour level of service especially for traffic using Masonic.

6.5.9 Interim Improvement Funding Policy. Funding for the recommended interim improvement shall be provided through a combination of public and private sources, as more fully described in the Implementation Element, Section 7.4.

Guideline. Table 6.4 details the estimated costs for the various interim improvement projects. The costs are order of magnitude. The estimate includes a 15 percent engineering and design component and a 40 percent contingency.

INTERIM CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS

S.P.R.R.



6.16

BELMONT DOWNTOWN
SPECIFIC PLAN
CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA



Figure 6.2

TABLE 6.4 PROPOSED INTERIM ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT COSTS

Improvement		Cost
Phase 1 Improvements		
Sixth/Ralston	Provide dual northbound left turns.	\$ 5,000
	Southbound right turn lane.	25,000
	Revise intersection signalization.	75,000
	Restripe traffic lanes.	2,500
Ralston between Sixth and ECR	Construct new median.	50,000
	Restripe traffic lanes.	10,000
	Traffic Control	20,000
Sixth between Ralston and O'Neill	Restripe traffic lanes.	10,000
O'Neill at ECR	Restripe new eastbound left and right turn lanes.	5,000
	If warranted, signalize intersection.	150,000
El Camino Real	Build central median.	75,000
	Provide protected parking south of O'Neill.	10,000
Sixth and Emmett	Construct signal (inter-connect to Ralston)	125,000
Old County Road and Masonic	Construct signal	90,000
Sub-Total Base Cost		\$652,500
Engineering and design (15%)		97,900
Contingency (40%)		251,000
Grand Total Interim Improvements		\$1,001,400

6.6 LONG RANGE TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT POLICIES AND OPTIONS

Several alternative, long range improvement programs are available to the City which could greatly benefit traffic flow at Ralston and El Camino, but which are primarily contingent upon the availability of sources for major funding. These alternatives require substantial changes to the circulation system including major widening of El Camino Real or grade separation of Ralston Avenue. The uncertain future condition of a possible grade separation of the railroad is also an important contingency in future decision making.

OBJECTIVE:

Work towards a resolution of the long term traffic congestion within the downtown area in coordination with the development of the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way.

6.6.1 Long Range Traffic Improvement Evaluation Policy. The City shall fully evaluate, at a minimum, the following three options for long-term traffic improvements

Guideline. Three potential policy options have been identified that address this objective. These concepts are illustrated on Figure 6.3*. Each provides a different level of improvement within the downtown and addresses a specific traffic problem. The three candidate projects are:

1. **Grade Separate Southern Pacific Railroad and Ralston Avenue.** This concept was not fully evaluated as part of the development of the downtown plan. This concept (as opposed to the lowering of Ralston Avenue) fully grade separates Ralston Avenue traffic from the railroad. Whether the tracks are lowered or raised will probably depend upon engineering feasibility and the configuration of the rail to the north and south along the corridor. If the rails are separated from Ralston Avenue, the potential for expanding the local circulation system within the downtown area is greatly enhanced. Two new crossings of El Camino Real could be created. One would be the easterly extension of O'Neill between El Camino Real and Old County Road. The second would extend Hill Street across the Southern Pacific tracks to Old County Road. The addition of these two roadways would provide alternative crossing points to Ralston Avenue. The provision of these crossings would divert traffic from Ralston Avenue and thus enhance the traffic levels of service at Ralston Avenue at Old County Road and El Camino Real.

To accommodate this concept, traffic signals would be required on El Camino Real at Hill Street and O'Neill. Under this concept, the level of service at El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue would probably improve substantially. It should be noted that while this concept does not add physical capacity to Ralston Avenue, it does eliminate existing delays caused by signal preemptions for Caltrain service.

2. **Grade Separate Ralston and El Camino Real Policy Option.** Two options exist for this grade separation. These are: 1) lower Ralston Avenue under El Camino Real and 2) lower El Camino Real under Ralston Avenue. With the lowering of El Camino Real, on and off-ramps would need to be developed for access to Ralston Avenue. Without a frontage roadway system parallel to El Camino Real, the land uses westerly of El Camino would be restricted. The effect would be to redirect traffic to O'Neill and Hill Streets. At Ralston, new intersections would be required on both sides of El Camino Real. Currently, the close proximity of Old County Road and El Camino Real causes substantial traffic problems. Old County Road may need to be substantially modified to accommodate this option.

The second preferred approach is to lower Ralston Avenue. This option maintains local access and allows for more direct benefit for east/west through traffic on Ralston Avenue and provides the least disruption to the Downtown. Under this option, a portal would be created on the easterly approach of Ralston Avenue at Sixth Avenue. The portal would be approximately 250 feet long to provide 15 feet of clearance between the structure and roadway. Under the Southern Pacific Railroad, 20 feet is required between top of tracks and top of pavement within the tunnel. A 4 percent grade was used to determine clearances and transitions for the grade separation. The easterly portal would need to be located on the westerly approach of Hill Street. The tunnel connecting the two portals would be 40 feet curb-to-curb in accordance with Caltrans standards and would provide for a single travel lane in each direction.

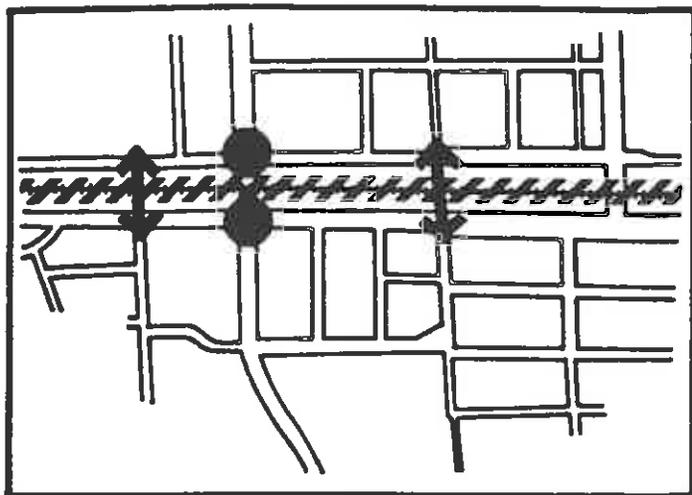
Between Sixth Avenue and El Camino Real on Ralston Avenue, the existing travel lane configuration would be modified to provide room for the undercrossing portal and surface turn lanes. This improvement will require the reduction in the number of travel lanes on Ralston Avenue.

At Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real, the existing travel lanes on El Camino Real would remain unchanged; however, on Ralston Avenue, the striping on both the eastbound and westbound approaches would be changed. Specifically, a single eastbound left turn lane and two through lanes would be allowed. Eastbound, a single left turn lane and a single through and right turn lane would be provided. On Ralston Avenue, between the easterly end of the portal and El Camino Real, the median would be landscaped.

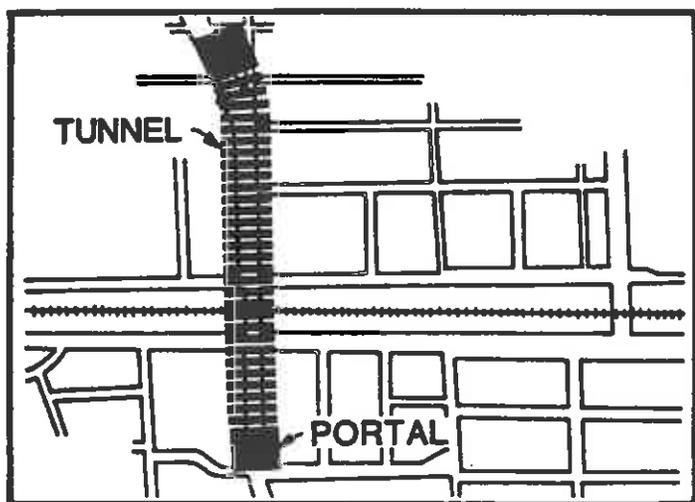
At Old County Road and Ralston Avenue, no change in traffic lane capacity is recommended; however, a realignment of the northerly curb between Old County Road and the railroad is recommended. Between Old County Road and Elmer Street a new median would be constructed. An eastbound right turn only lane would be provided. Left turns from westbound Ralston Avenue would be maintained.

*** Note:** More detailed drawings of these alternatives have been prepared and are available at the Community Development Department Office at the Belmont City Hall.

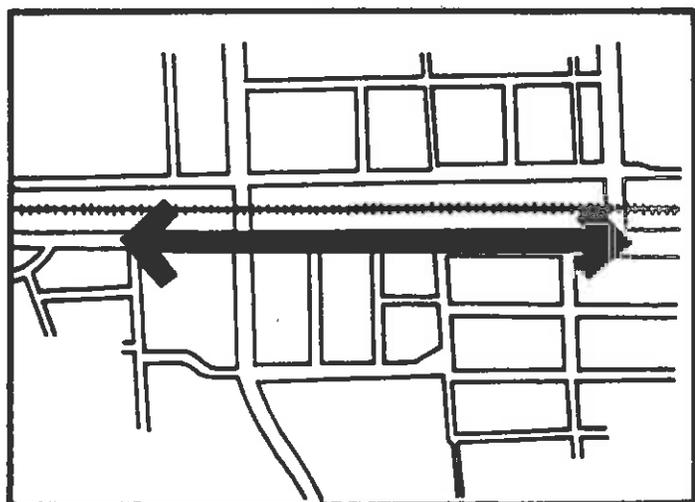
LONG-RANGE CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS



Grade separate Southern Pacific Railroad and Ralston Avenue. Revision of intersection at Old County Road and El Camino Real may be required.



Grade separate Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real. Provide two-lane tunnel between Sixth Avenue and Hiller Street to separate east/west through movements at El Camino Real and Old County Road.



Widen El Camino Real from four to six travel lanes between Hill Street and Harbor Boulevard. No additional turn lanes along El Camino Real proposed.

Between Elmer Street and Hiller Street along Ralston Avenue, major changes to the existing street would be required. The easterly portal would extend from Hiller Street to the western side of Granada Street. As a result, turn movements from Ralston Avenue into Granada westbound would not occur.

At Granada Street, Ralston Avenue continues into the residential areas to the south while Old Ralston Avenue continues on to Hiller and the U.S. 101 interchange. Old Ralston Avenue intersects Hiller just south of the major Ralston Avenue linkage. It is proposed that the segment of Old Ralston Avenue between Hiller and Granada be maintained as a two-way facility, thus providing full access between the land uses along Granada Street and Ralston Avenue to the south.

The under grounding of Ralston Avenue between Sixth Avenue and Hiller Street is estimated at 20 to 25 million dollars. This includes construction of the under crossing and the reconstruction of Ralston Avenue, changes in signalization and signing. Not included in the estimate is any purchase of right-of-way to accommodate the ultimate widening of Ralston Avenue between Sixth Avenue and Hiller Street.

Finally, the traffic movements between Ralston Avenue and southbound U.S. 101 just east of Hiller require that all eastbound traffic on Ralston Avenue must use Old Ralston Avenue at Hiller northbound to access U.S. 101 northbound. Traffic on Ralston Avenue exiting the portal eastbound would be given a choice to either access southbound 101 or proceed easterly to the Harbor Bay Parkway. Eastbound traffic adjacent to the portal on Ralston Avenue would be directed to southbound U.S. 101 only. A comprehensive signing program would be needed to manage the eastbound traffic flows in the area between Elmer Street and U.S. 101.

3. **Widening El Camino Real Policy Option.** This project would provide 6 through travel lanes on El Camino Real between Hill Street and Harbor Boulevard. Preliminary discussions with Caltrans indicate that Caltrans would require that El Camino Real be widened to 6 lanes from the northern to southern city boundaries in the City of Belmont. In the development of this option a number of alternatives for adding additional capacity at El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue were evaluated. This included providing dual left turn lanes on the northbound and southbound approaches of El Camino Real versus maintaining the existing right turn lanes on these approaches. It was determined that maintaining the existing right turn lanes was most appropriate. The change in level of service produced by adding the left turn lanes and eliminating the rights versus maintaining the rights was about equal. To provide both the right and left turn lanes would require an extensive encroachment into the easterly property line of El Camino Real and may prohibit reasonable development options between Hill and Harbor. The expansion of El Camino Real to 6 lanes is estimated to cost between 17 and 21 million dollars. This includes the demolition of existing structures, the purchase of right-of-way and reconstruction of El Camino Real. The project area is only between Hill Street and

Harbor Boulevard. No estimate for the widening of El Camino Real from the northern to southern City boundary was developed.

6.6.2 Long Range Traffic Improvement Selection Policy. Based upon the evaluation recommended in Policy 6.6.1, the City shall select an alternative and institute a process intended to implement the preferred plan.

Guideline. The interim improvement policies of this Plan are not intended to facilitate or accommodate the total potential development which could occur under the Plan. The City recognizes the need for additional traffic improvements to accommodate buildout of the Plan. However, a preferred alternative was not selected for a variety of reasons including:

- The lack of a long-term transit improvement program for the Southern Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way.
- The unavailability of financing through CalTrans to improve the El Camino Real.
- The inability of the City to implement bonds or other funding mechanisms to pay for a long-range traffic improvement program.

6.7 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE GROUP TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

Public and private transportation facilities provide for the movement of goods and people generally along fixed routes and on a fixed schedule in contrast to the circulation system of roads for private automobiles and trucks which permit random movement. Belmont is served by rail and bus transportation.

Rail Services. Rail service to Belmont is provided on the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks and operated by Caltrans. The Caltrain service provides AM and PM peak hour and mid-day service between San Francisco and San Jose. A significant portion of Belmont residents work in San Francisco or northern San Mateo County and many commute by rail. The Belmont depot is located north of Ralston Avenue between El Camino Real and Old County Road and is accessible by automobile and bus. As patronage increases, car or van pooling, bus or other means of transportation to the depot will be encouraged to avert excessive demand for parking spaces. Rail spur lines serve the Harbor Industrial area southeast of the downtown area.

Samtrans. The San Mateo Transit District (Samtrans) provides intercity bus service to all of the cities within San Mateo County. Local service is available to most parts of Belmont while commuter service is available via express routes along U.S. 101. Samtrans has assumed the responsibility to provide commute bus serves within Belmont and San Mateo County.

TRANSIT SERVICE OBJECTIVE:

Promote and support expanded transit service to the downtown to reduce automobile congestion and facilitate desired levels of downtown development.

The following policies are directed at continued participation by the City of Belmont in the development of alternative travel modes within the downtown areas.

POLICIES:

6.7.1 The City shall encourage the development of the El Camino Real and Southern Pacific rights-of-way as a major intercity transportation corridor to accommodate mass transit as well as automobile, bus and bicycle movement.

6.7.2 Traffic signalization shall be provided, if warranted, into the future parking lots serving the Caltrain depot at the intersection of El Camino Real and Middle Road.

6.8 DOWNTOWN PARKING POLICIES

Parking is provided in the downtown through a combination of on-street and off-street parking spaces. Based upon existing supply and calculated demand based on City Standards, there appears to be an overall shortage of 263 spaces within the downtown area. However, the real space deficiencies depend on whether existing demand for downtown commercial goods and services match established standards. Shortfalls are calculated in all quadrants of the downtown. The largest shortfalls are in the northwest and southeast areas. The total shortfall within these areas is 117 and 128 spaces respectively. In sum, there are 1,948 spaces within the study area compared to a calculated demand of 2,211 spaces. Of the existing spaces, 456 spaces are on-street.

None of the spaces are metered; however, selected locations provide for time parking restrictions. All off-street spaces are provided on a site-by-site basis by individual land uses operated for the sole use of the businesses they serve. It is anticipated that there are no physical constraints to providing these facilities on a site-by-site basis. Public parking facilities at the Caltrain Depot (with 165 spaces) is reserved for the exclusive use of commuters.

The current City parking standards are generally adequate. However, some changes should be made to more accurately reflect parking demand, primarily for office uses. Specifically, general office use generates a demand for 25 percent less parking spaces than the current City standard requires to be provided. Also, medical office generate a demand for 50 percent more parking than do general offices uses.

DOWNTOWN PARKING OBJECTIVE:

Provide additional off-street parking in the Central Business District through provision of adequate on-site facilities.

The following policies detail the basic parking strategy for the downtown. Two sets of policies are provided. Short term policies relate to policies implemented within the 0 to 10 year period. These policies are generally not dependent upon major decisions concerning redevelopment or major changes in parking policy. The long term policies have great potential within the downtown and should be discussed further when increased commercial activity shows an increased need for parking. Figure 6.4 defines the short term constraints and opportunities within the downtown area.

SHORT TERM POLICIES:

6.8.1 Parking Rate Policy: The parking rates detailed on Table 6.5 should be applied to uses within the downtown area.

Guideline. Existing parking rates are compared to the proposed rates of this Plan. These proposed rates are based upon current standards recommended by the Institute of Traffic Engineers. Within the office uses category, general office experiences a demand of about 2.8 spaces per 1,000 square feet. The City's current standard is 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet. Alternatively, medical offices generate higher parking demands near 5.6 spaces per 1,000 square feet. Finally, public government offices produce a demand for about 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet.

PARKING CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES



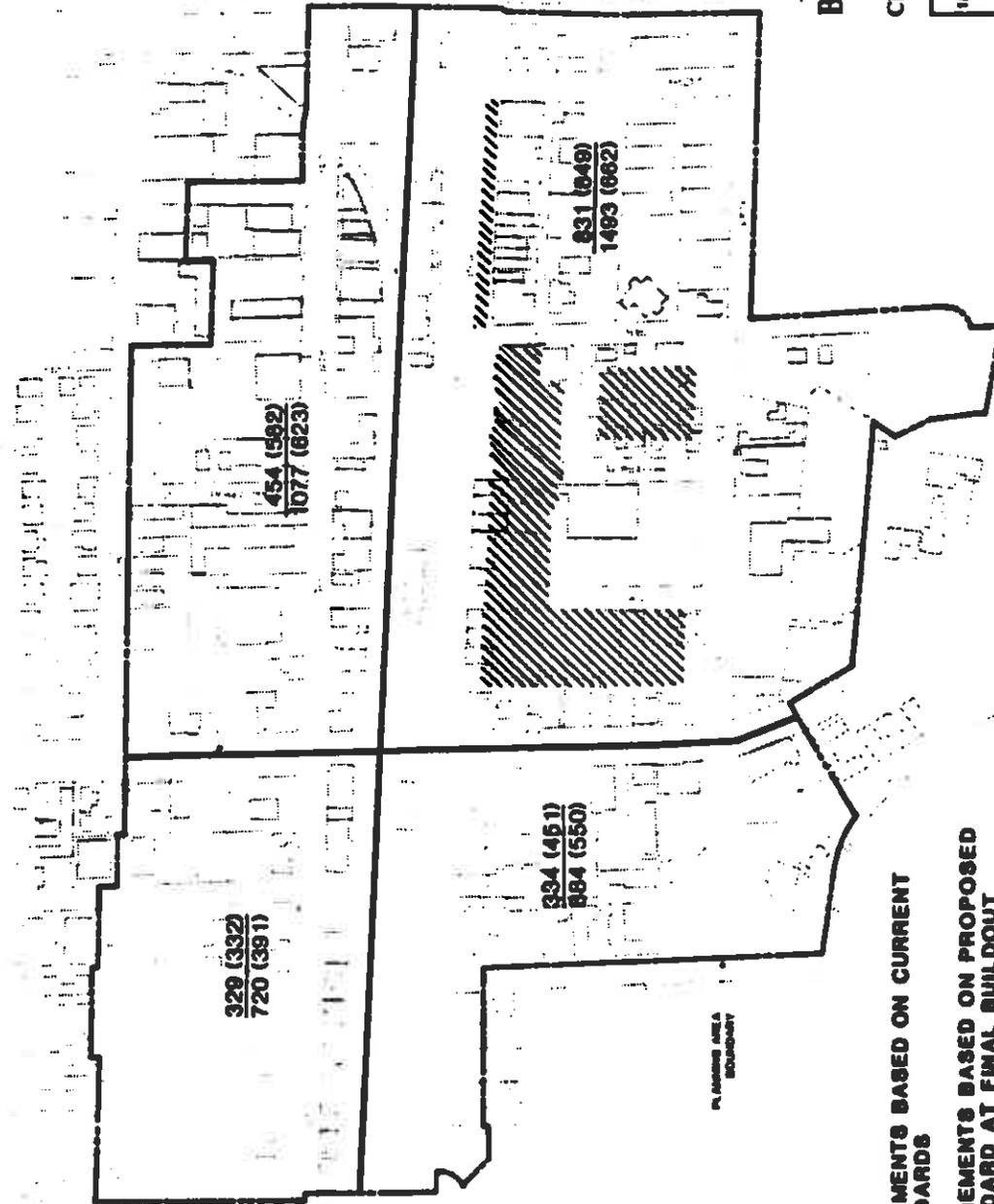
QUADRANT



PARKING OPPORTUNITIES

XX(XX) EXIST. SUPPLY (EXIST. REQUIREMENT¹)

XX(XX) FUTURE REQUIREMENT² (ADDITIONAL OFF-STREET SPACES REQUIRED³)



¹ EXIST. REQUIREMENTS BASED ON CURRENT PARKING STANDARDS

² FUTURE REQUIREMENTS BASED ON PROPOSED PARKING STANDARD AT FINAL BUILDOUT

³ ADDITIONAL SPACES REQUIRED FUTURE REQUIREMENT - EXIST. SUPPLY

BELMONT DOWNTOWN
SPECIFIC PLAN
CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA

Figure 6.4

TABLE 6.5 PARKING GUIDELINES

Use	Description	Summary of Existing Standards	Proposed Parking Rate
CE	Restaurant downtown village	1 per 4 people + 1/600 sf	6/1000 sf
CF	Food and liquor	4/1000 sf	4/1000 sf
CR	Convenience Retail	4/1000 sf	4/1000 sf
CS	Service Commercial	2/1000 sf	2/1000 sf
CT	Theatre (special)	.2/seat	.3/seat
OG	Office General	4/1000 sf	3/1000 sf
OF	Office financial	4/1000 sf + 3/teller ext. window	3/1000 sf
OM	Medical Office	None noted	5.6/1000 sf
IG	Public Government office	4/1000 sf	3.0/1000 sf
ICT	Community Center	1/6 seats	4/1000 sf
RI	Single Family Residential	2/dwelling unit	2/dwelling unit
RT	Multiple Family Residential	2/dwelling unit	2/dwelling unit
LI	Light industrial	2/1000 + 1/2000 ext.	2/1000 + 1/2000 ext.

Source: 2nd Edition, Parking Generation, Institute of Transportation Engineers, 1987

Requests for reduction in the City's on-site parking requirements shall be considered favorably provided the following circumstances apply: 1. the proposed use will contribute substantially to the vitality of the downtown area, 2. on-street or public parking is available to offset the parking reduction, and 3. the applicant pays an in-lieu parking fee to allow additional parking to be created. Application of this policy will be discretionary by the City under recommendation by the staff. The policy is intended to allow for flexibility within the parking requirements to accommodate special or unique circumstances.

6.8.2 Requests for reduction in the City's on-site parking requirements may be considered favorably provided the following circumstances apply:

- (1) **The proposed use will contribute substantially to the vitality of the downtown area.**
- (2) **On-street or public parking is available to offset the parking reduction.**

- (3) **The applicant pays an in-lieu parking fee to allow additional parking to be created.**

6.8.3 Village Center Quadrant Policy 1: A mix of public and private parking shall be provided within the Village Center quadrant.

Guideline. The Village Center Element policies encourage adequate on-site parking, and provide for some on-site parking relief if public parking opportunities warrant. Increasing public parking opportunities adjacent to private parking areas will allow more private commercial building areas and help increase the potential for sales and tax revenues to the City. Public parking opportunities should be expanded to encourage patrons to park once and walk to any uses in the Village Center Area. Parking expansion opportunity areas are shown on Figure 6.4.

6.8.4 Village Center Quadrant Policy 2: Up to a 15 percent reduction in office related parking space demand shall be allowed within the Village Center due to shared parking with retail and other commercial uses provided within the Village Center.

Guideline. Parking provided at 4 spaces per 1,000 square will insure adequate supplies to accommodate both office and retail demands. However, certain uses have shared parking characteristics. About 21 percent of the Village Center is anticipated to be developed as restaurants. Assuming office workers eat within the Village Center, the overall parking rate should be reduced correspondingly to reflect this situation. Once a final development plan is prepared for the Village Center, an overall parking rate for the development should be developed and shared parking opportunities encouraged.

6.8.5 Village Center Quadrant Policy 3: Angled parking shall be provided along the western edge of El Camino Real to the south of O'Neill.

Guideline. El Camino Real south of O'Neill is sufficiently wide to provide for 60 degree angled parking on a one-way roadway.

6.8.6 Village Center Quadrant Policy 4: On-site parking requirements within the "cottage blocks" shall be reduced to facilitate the preservation and conversion to commercial use of existing residential structures under the following circumstances:

- (1) **As much on-site parking as possible should be provided and the applicant should demonstrate how more parking could be provided in the rear yards if better access becomes available.**
- (2) **The applicant grants a cross easement in favor of the City and other land owners on the block to permit future coordinated rear yard parking.**
- (3) **The applicant pays an in-lieu fee for parking to allow additional parking to be created by the City for this area in the future.**

Guideline. The residential structures in the blocks between O'Neill and Waltermire and Sixth and El Camino Real will not be able to easily accommodate the additional parking required to convert from residential to commercial use. It is very difficult for many of these lots to access their rear yards. To facilitate the conversion to commercial use, this policy allows parking reductions while creating a funding source and agreements to permit future coordinated rear yard parking.

6.8.7 Ralston Avenue Parking Policy: Curb parking, shall be eliminated along Ralston Avenue between Sixth Avenue and El Camino Real after development of the Village Center.

Guideline. To provide for 4 travel lanes along Ralston Avenue between Sixth and El Camino Real, existing curb parking should be eliminated. Further, the parking located on the southern curb will be replaced by new parking within the Village Center.

6.8.8 Village Center Quadrant Policy 5: Structured parking should be developed adjacent to the Creekside Office building to provide needed parking for the downtown and accommodate parking for Creekside park during off-peak periods.

LONG TERM POLICIES

6.8.9 Walgreens' Quadrant Parking Policy: The City should consider revising existing parking access within the Walgreens' quadrant if redevelopment is proposed.

Guideline. The existing access into the entire Walgreens quadrant is poor. With the redevelopment of this sector the need for better access and egress will need to be addressed. As part of these detailed studies, existing parking may need to be revised and reconfigured.

6.8.10 Eliminate Parking Along Portions of Ralston Avenue Policy: Consider requesting Caltrans to eliminate the parking on the west and/or east side of El Camino Real to allow for more curb to curb dimension for additional vehicle turning lanes at Ralston Avenue or other critical intersections between Middle Road and Harbor Boulevard.

Guideline. While the plan does not call for the widening of El Camino Real, an option has been discussed. Whether El Camino Real is widened in the future, additional capacity can be provided if the existing curb parking is eliminated. If parking is restricted, the parking restriction should be considered for the entire length of El Camino Real from Hill to O'Neill to ensure adequate merging distances.

6.8.11 Old County Road Parking Policy: Non-residential property owners along Old County Road shall be encouraged to obtain and develop joint use off-street parking areas to serve existing businesses and anticipated new development. Such parking areas shall be landscaped or fenced or otherwise screened from adjoining residential uses.

6.8.12 Downtown Curb Parking Management Policy: The City shall consider the control of on-street parking by either time restrictions (i.e., 2 hour parking zones) or meters to ensure maximum use of existing and future off-street parking supplies.

Guideline. In the future, the shortfall of parking could become significant if adequate off-street parking is not provided. As certain areas or concentrations of use are given variances to the new parking requirements, the demand for parking will increase. To help manage all parking resources and ensure that all parking both adjacent to and remote from downtown facilities are used, the development of timed or metered parking ensures adequate turnover of curb spaces and discourages the use of curb parking by employees.

6.8.13 Develop parking opportunities behind the buildings on Ralston Avenue to the east of Old County Road.

Guideline. Ralston Avenue east of Old County Road will develop as a retail frontage facility with parking provided behind the store fronts. Access to new parking should be provided by secondary collector streets such as Elmer and Old County Road. Parking within these rear parking areas could be managed to allow shared parking opportunities throughout these facilities and required to provide vehicular access to adjoining commercial parking areas.

7.0 Implementation Element

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT

7.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The effect of this Specific Plan on the redevelopment and revitalization of Downtown Belmont can only be realized to the degree that the objectives, policies, and guidelines of the Plan can be effectively implemented. The strategy developed for the systematic implementation of this Specific Plan consists of a combination of regulatory, capital improvement financing, and administrative redevelopment actions to be carried out by the City. This strategy intends to forge a partnership for joint public and private sector action and will require a continuous and on-going process of refinements and adaptations to economic opportunities. The purpose of this element is to identify 1) the planning and regulatory measures which can direct private redevelopment efforts over the long-term, 2) the public improvements necessary to achieve downtown goals and objectives and the financing methods which are available, and 3) the administrative actions which the City Redevelopment Authority can take to promote and encourage a public-private partnership in redevelopment.

This element provides the City with a prioritized step-by-step public implementation program which includes a listing of required General Plan and zoning changes, necessary Redevelopment Agency actions, public improvements and preliminary cost estimates, a phasing schedule for public sector activities, and other general downtown programs.

7.2 IMPLEMENTATION GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL:

ESTABLISH A PHASED IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PROGRAM FOR JOINT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT, AND PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONTINUED ADMINISTRATION OF REGULATORY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE SPECIFIC PLAN.

OBJECTIVES:

This goal can be realized through the accomplishment of the following objectives:

1. Plan Regulation and Administration Objective

Administer the Specific Plan in conformance with stated mandates, which include an annual review, preparation of an annual report, and actions to carry out the

intents and programs of the Plan. Ensure consistency between the Specific Plan and other regulatory measures administered by the City to direct land use development.

2. Public Improvement and Financing Objective:

Carry out a prioritized public improvement program which enhances downtown appearance, promotes high quality private sector development, and improves the effectiveness of downtown infrastructure.

3. Redevelopment Program Objective:

The Redevelopment Agency should use its influence and capabilities in facilitating a public/private partnership approach to achieving downtown redevelopment goals, plans and projects.

The Redevelopment Agency can serve as an important catalyst in stimulating and spearheading a wide range of downtown projects but especially in initiating and assisting in the implementation of the Village Center program. The Redevelopment Agency should take an active role and should focus its efforts on this project.

7.3 PLAN REGULATION AND ADMINISTRATION POLICIES AND ACTIONS

OBJECTIVE:

ADMINISTER THE SPECIFIC PLAN IN CONFORMANCE WITH STATED MANDATES, WHICH INCLUDE AN ANNUAL REVIEW, PREPARATION OF AN ANNUAL REPORT, AND ACTIONS TO CARRY OUT THE INTENTS AND PROGRAMS OF THE PLAN. ENSURE CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE SPECIFIC PLAN AND OTHER REGULATORY MEASURES ADMINISTERED BY THE CITY TO DIRECT LAND USE DEVELOPMENT.

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS POLICIES:

Government Code, Section 65454 states that "A Specific Plan may not be adopted or amended unless the proposed Plan is consistent with the General Plan." The following action statements identify those amendments to the existing General Plan which are necessary to ensure consistency between the General Plan and this Specific Plan.

7.3.1 General Plan Land Use Map Amendment Action. The City shall amend the Land Use Map of the General Plan by delineating the boundary of the Downtown planning area and noting on the map that the land use designations within this area shall be governed by the Downtown Belmont Specific Plan.

7.3.2 General Plan Land Use Policy Amendment Action. The City shall amend the Commercial Areas Policy 4 and 5, page 2-12 and 2-13 of the City General Plan to state that "land use development within the Central Business District shall be regulated by the policies and guidelines of the Downtown Belmont Specific Plan".

7.3.3 General Plan Circulation Element Amendment Action, Arterial Street Description. The City shall amend the description of arterial streets (paragraph 2090, page 2-45) to designate Old County Road north of Ralston as an arterial street containing 2 lanes, a pavement width of 64 feet, and a right-of-way of 84 feet. Similarly, Old County Road north of Ralston shall be removed from designation as a major collector (paragraph 2097).

7.3.4 General Plan, Circulation Element Amendment Action, Major Collector Street Description. The City of Belmont shall amend the description of major collector streets (paragraph 2097) to designate Sixth Avenue south of Ralston, and O'Neill Street east of Sixth Avenue as major collectors. Sixth Avenue south of Ralston shall be removed from designation as a collector street (paragraph 2099).

7.3.5 General Plan, Circulation Element Amendment Action, Collector Street Description. The City shall amend the description of collector streets (paragraph 2099) to designate Sixth Avenue north of Ralston Avenue; Cypress Avenue north of Hill Street to Middle Road; Harbor Boulevard west of El Camino Real; and Palm Avenue, as collector streets. Emmett Street shall be eliminated as a collector street designation.

ZONING AMENDMENTS

Whereas the policies of this Specific Plan provide an overall "blueprint" or description of the desired results of downtown redevelopment and revitalization, they are intended to be adopted as resolution by the City Council. As resolution, these policies would not have direct regulatory authority over land development, but are only "a declaration with respect to future purpose or proceedings" (OPR, 1988).

The mechanism by which the City can enforce its regulatory authority is through ordinance. An ordinance is a local law which is adopted with all the legal formalities of a statute. The following action statements identify those revisions or amendments to existing ordinances and plans which must be made such that the tools available to the City to enforce their land use authority are consistent with the policies and guidelines of this Plan.

7.3.6 Village Center Zoning Amendment Action. The City shall either amend the existing General Commercial (C-2) Zoning District, Section 5.2, or shall create a new zoning district to incorporate the following development standards from Table 7.1 as they pertain to the Downtown Planning Area.

**Table 7.1
VILLAGE CENTER DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

- Permitted Uses:** Establishments which can satisfy the general objectives of creating a lively, attractively designed mix of storefront uses. Such establishments may include the sales of retail products and services, personal services or commodities, general business offices when located on the third floor, and public recreation and open space. Permit up to 3,000 square feet of first floor building area to be used for banking services.
- Conditional Uses:** Pet stores, public and private libraries, museums, uses conducted before 7:00 a.m. or after 11:00 p.m., and circuses and carnivals.
- Intensity:** FAR = 0.75 for parcels greater than 1 acre
FAR = 0.50 for parcels less than 1 acre
- Setback Requirements:** The "Village Center" setback, as described in Policy 4.5.4 shall apply to Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real. The "Streetwall Plaza" setback, as described in Policy 4.5.4 shall apply to Sixth Street. The "Urban Streetwall" setback, as described in Policy 4.5.4 shall apply to Waltermire Street.
- Building Height:** The maximum building height shall be 3 stories (40 feet), with the exception of a special landmark feature such as a clock or bell tower which shall be allowed with no height limitations. The predominant building height shall be 2 to 3 stories, stepping back from a 1 story streetwall at the corner of Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real (see Figure 3.1).
- Parking:** 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of net retail and/or office space, as per City Zoning Ordinance Section 8.4. Restaurant and office uses facilities allowed and encouraged to share parking facilities, thereby reducing the total potential parking demand.
- Landscaping:** A landscaped public plaza of a minimum size of 2,500 sq. ft. shall be provided within the Village Center. Perimeter plantings, parking islands and street trees shall be provided in a manner consistent with the streetscape policies of the Urban Design Element of the Downtown Specific Plan. Street trees and interior tree plantings shall be spaced no greater than 30 feet on center. Planters shall be provided within all pedestrian plazas and walkways.

7.3.7 General Commercial Zoning Amendment Action. The City shall amend the existing General Commercial (C-2) Zoning District Section 5.2 to incorporate the following development standards from Table 7.2 as they pertain to the Downtown Planning Area.

**Table 7.2
GENERAL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

- Permitted Uses:** Retail stores engaged in the selling of retail products and services, establishments which supply personal services or commodities, general and professional business offices and parks, public recreation and open space facilities.
- Conditional Uses:** Gas stations, parking lots, churches and religious establishments, pet stores, private clubs and lodges, private and public libraries and museums, any use conducted before 7:00 am. or after 11:00 p.m., circuses and carnivals, taverns and lounges, auto-related accessories, commercial amusement and entertainment centers, and multiple-family residential dwelling units which comply with the standards for High Density Residential Districts as established under this Plan.
- Intensity of Use:** FAR = 0.5
- Setback Requirements:** "Urban Streetwall", "Streetwall Plaza", and "Landscaped Building Frontage" setbacks shall apply to the General Commercial District, as shown on Figure 4 3.
- Building Height:** The maximum building height shall be 3 stories (40 feet). Buildings with frontage along Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real shall have a maximum streetwall of 28 feet in height. Additional stories shall be set back from the streetwall consistent with Policy 4.5.2 of this Plan.
- Parking:** Parking facilities shall be provided as required or permitted in Section 8.0 of the City Zoning Ordinance.
- Landscaping:** A range between 10% and 15% of the gross site area shall be planted and landscaped, as determined appropriate by City Staff. A minimum of 1 tree shall be provided for each 400 square feet of landscaped area.

7.3.8 Mixed Commercial/Residential Zoning Amendment Action. The City shall either amend the existing General Commercial (C-2) Zoning District, Section 5.2; or shall create a new zoning district to incorporate the following development standards from Table 7.3 as they pertain to the Downtown Planning Area.

Table 7.3
MIXED COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

- Permitted Uses:** Retail stores engaged in selling retail products and services, establishments which supply personal services or commodities, public recreation or open space facilities, and multiple family residential dwelling units consistent with the standards for high density residential developments as described in this Plan.
- Conditional Uses:** Pet stores, public and private libraries, museums, all uses conducted before 7:00 a.m. or after 11:00 p.m., private clubs and lodges, churches, gas stations, commercial entertainment and amusement centers, theaters, and single family residential development consistent with the standards for low density residential development as described in this Plan.
- Intensity of Use:** Commercial FAR = 0.5
Residential FAR = 1.0
Combined Use FAR = 1.0 FAR (residential) and 0.5 FAR (commercial) equals 1.5
- Minimum Lot Size:** 7,200 square feet
- Minimum Street Frontage:** 72 feet
- Setback Requirements:** "Urban Streetwall", "Streetwall Plaza", and Landscaped Building Frontage" setbacks shall apply to the Mixed Commercial/Residential District, as shown on Figure 4.3.
- Building Height:** Maximum building height shall be 3 stories (40 feet). Buildings with frontage along Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real shall have a maximum streetwall of 28 feet in height. Additional stories shall be set back consistent with Policy 4.5.2 of this Plan.
- Parking:** Parking facilities shall be provided as required or permitted in Section 8.0 of the City Zoning Ordinance. Building intensities of greater than 05 FAR assume that underground parking facilities would be required to meet on-site parking demands. A minimum of 50% of the required parking for commercial uses shall be located on the ground floor.
- Landscaping:** 1) Residential projects shall provide 300 square feet of yard area for each unit located on the ground floor, and an additional 150 square feet of yard area for each unit located above the ground floor. 2) Commercial projects shall provide landscaped yards equal to a range of between 10% and 15% of the gross site area. 3) Mixed commercial/residential projects shall provide landscaped yards equal to 10% of the total gross floor area of the combined uses, or 15% of the total gross site area, whichever provides the greatest amount of landscaping.

7.3.9 Highway Commercial Zoning Amendment Action. The City shall amend the existing Highway Commercial (C-3) Zoning District, Section 5.4 of the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the following development standards from Table 7.4 as they pertain to the Downtown Planning Area.

**Table 7.4
HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

- Permitted Uses:** Any use permitted in the General Commercial District, and retail stores and service establishments which supply commodities or provide services primarily to meet the needs of the community and the traveling public.
- Conditional Uses:** Any use conditionally permitted in the General Commercial District, ambulance services, car washes, food and service drive-through establishments, motels, machinery sales rental and service, vehicular repair shops and other similar establishments. Residential Development consistent with the standards for high, medium or low density residential districts, as established by this Plan, may be allowed as a conditional use upon grant of a use permit.
- Intensity of Use:** FAR = 0.5
- Setback Requirements:** "Village Center", "Urban Streetwall", "Streetwall Plaza", and "Landscaped Building Frontage" setbacks shall each apply to the Highway Commercial District, as shown on Figure 4.3 of this Plan.
- Building Height:** The maximum building height shall be 3 stories (40 feet). Buildings with frontage along El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue shall have a maximum streetwall of 2 stories (28 feet) in height. Additional stories shall be stepped back consistent with Policy 4.5.2 of this Plan.
- Parking:** Parking facilities shall be provided as required or permitted in Section 8 of the City Zoning Ordinance.
- Landscaping:** A range of between 10% and 15% of the gross site area shall be planted and landscaped as appropriate by City Staff. A minimum of one tree shall be provided for each 400 square feet of landscaped area.

7.3.10 Service Commercial Zoning Amendment Action. The City shall amend the existing Service Commercial (C-4) Zoning District, Section 5.5 of the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the following development standards from Table 7.5 as they pertain to the Downtown Planning Area.

**Table 7.5
SERVICE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

- Permitted Use:** Any use permitted in the Service Commercial District, except that the zoning ordinance shall be amended to eliminate the following permitted uses - dry cleaning and public laundries, food stores, liquor stores, drug stores, retail bakeries, and restaurants are not permitted uses.
- Conditional Uses:** Any use conditionally permitted in the Service Commercial District, except that the following uses shall be added as conditional uses - dry cleaning and public laundries, food stores, liquor stores, drug stores, retail bakeries, and restaurants, and such other high traffic generation uses that the Zoning Administrator determines are subject to conditional use permit review.
- Intensity of Use:** FAR = 0.5
- Setback Requirements:** "Urban Streetwall" or "Landscaped Building Frontage" setbacks shall apply to the Service Commercial District as shown on Figure 4.3 of this Plan.
- Building Height:** The maximum building height shall be 3 stories (40 feet).
- Parking:** Parking facilities shall be provided as required or permitted in Section 8.0 of the City Zoning Ordinance.
- Landscaping:** A minimum of 10% of the gross site area shall be devoted to landscape design features.

7.3.11 High Density Residential Zoning Amendment Action. The City shall amend the existing Multi-Family Residential (R-4) Zoning District, Section 4.5 of the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the following development standards from Table 7.6 as they pertain to the Downtown Planning Area.

**Table 7.6
HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

Permitted Uses:	Multi-family dwellings and accessory uses which are necessary to multi-family dwellings.
Conditional Uses:	All uses conditionally permitted within the low density residential district, hospitals and sanitariums, private clubs or lodges, fraternity or sorority houses, and all new buildings and additional dwelling units.
Intensity of Use:	The maximum residential density shall be 30 units per net acre, governed by a standard of 1,450 square feet of net lot area per unit. The floor area ratio shall not exceed 1.4.
Minimum Setback Requirements:	15 feet front yard, 6 feet plus 2 feet per each additional story above 2 stories side yard, and 15 feet rear yard.
Minimum Lot Size:	7,200 square feet.
Minimum Lot Width and Frontage:	Average lot width shall be 60 feet. Minimum street frontage shall be 72 feet.
Building Height:	The maximum building height shall be 3 stories (40 feet).
Parking:	Off-street parking shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of Section 8.0 of the City Zoning Ordinance.
Landscaping:	A minimum of 300 square feet of open space area shall be required for each dwelling unit on the ground floor, plus 150 square feet of open space area for each unit above the ground floor. Roof decks, balconies, or other open structural open areas which are improved for outdoor living may be used to satisfy the open space requirements for above ground floor units. Ground floor open space areas shall be a minimum of 10 feet in average width and a minimum of 20 feet in average length.

7.3.12 Low Density Residential Zoning Amendment Action. The City shall amend the existing Single Family Residential (R-1B and R-1C) Zoning District, Section 4.2 of the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the following development standards from Table 7.7 as they pertain to the Downtown Planning Area.

**Table 7.7
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

Permitted Uses:	Single family residences, crop and tree farms and gardens, accessory structures for which the use is clearly related to single family dwellings, and home occupations.
Conditional Uses:	Public parks and recreational facilities, schools, churches and religious institutions, nursing homes or convalescent homes accommodating not more than 5 patients or residents, public and private libraries and museums, public buildings necessary for health, safety and general welfare, and secondary living units.
Intensity of Use:	1 dwelling unit per lot. Minimum permitted floor area shall be 1,200 square feet, maximum gross floor area shall be 3,500 square feet.
Minimum Lot Size:	5,000 square feet
Minimum Setback Requirements:	15 feet front yard, 6 feet side yard, 15 feet rear yard.
Minimum Lot Width and Frontage:	Average lot width shall be 50 feet, the minimum street frontage shall be 30 feet.
Building Height:	Maximum building height shall be 2 stories (28 feet).
Parking:	Off-street parking shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of Section 8.0 of the City Zoning Ordinance.
Landscaping:	No requirements

7.3.13 Zoning Map Amendment Action. The City shall amend the location and boundaries of the zoning districts established on the "Zoning Map, Belmont, California" to reflect the zoning boundaries shown in Figure 7.1 Zoning Policy Map. These amendments to the Zoning Map are necessary to bring the zoning into conformance with the land use designations of this Plan.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES

This specific plan is intended to act as a bridge between the existing general plan and individual development proposals, providing specific policies and guidelines for the systematic implementation of the general plan. It does not however, assure developers of a vested right to develop in a manner which is consistent with the plan. Only tentative maps and development agreements can assure this vested right. Pursuant to application for tentative maps and development agreements, the City of Belmont has a variety of approval procedures and development reviews which are used as a means of screening proposed projects to ensure consistency with existing parks and maintaining environmental quality. The following policies describe and ensure the continued reliance of these procedures as a means of processing development proposals.

7.3.14 EIR Review Policy. The City of Belmont has the responsibility and authority to regulate proposed private and public projects and programs to control environmental pollution and enhance environmental quality. This authority, granted under the California Environmental Quality Act, shall be continued pursuant to development under this specific plan. Although residential and commercial projects which implement and are consistent with this specific plan may be exempted from additional CEQA review, the city shall make a determination of the sufficiency of this specific plan's EIR to identify the project's significant effects and corresponding mitigation measures at the time of application. Should the city find that the EIR for this specific plan is insufficient in detailing such impacts and mitigation measures, a supplemental EIR shall be prepared.

7.3.15 Specific Plan Amendment Policy. When, in the opinion of the City Council, a change in this specific plan is necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the city, or to respond to changing economic conditions, this specific plan may be amended, either in text, or map or both. Such amendments shall be conducted in accordance with Section 20.0 of the City Zoning Ordinance.

7.3.16 Zoning Amendment Policy. When, in the opinion of the City Council, a change in the zoning ordinance is necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan, the zoning ordinance may be amended in accordance with Section 16.0 of the City Zoning Ordinance.

7.3.17 Specific Plan Compensation Policy. Upon the adoption of this Plan, the City of Belmont shall charge developers a fee to cover the costs of the preparation, addition and administration of the Plan, including the cost of evaluating the Plan under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. This fee shall be charged to anyone seeking approval of a development project which is required to be consistent with this Specific Plan. The fee is prorated based on the estimated relative benefit that the developer derives from the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan fees shall be prorated by means of the following equation:

$FEE = A [M (1 + bn)]$ Where: A = Number of net acres in the proposed project, measured to the edge of property line; M = The City's average cost per net acre of preparing the Specific Plan and EIR; b = The projected annual inflation rate; and n = Number of years since the year the Specific Plan was adopted.

7.4 PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND FINANCING POLICIES AND ACTIONS

The combined goals of revitalizing Downtown and improving its appearance and function will require continuing public and private investments in the physical structure of Downtown Belmont. Capital improvements form an important responsibility of the public sector in initiating and cooperating in a public/private partnership. Improvements made by the City encourage and stimulate private reinvestment. This section sets forth the essential public sector policies for phasing and initiating capital improvements and their financing.

OBJECTIVE:

CARRY OUT A PRIORITIZED PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM WHICH ENHANCES DOWNTOWN APPEARANCE, PROMOTES HIGH QUALITY PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT, AND IMPROVES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE

POLICIES:

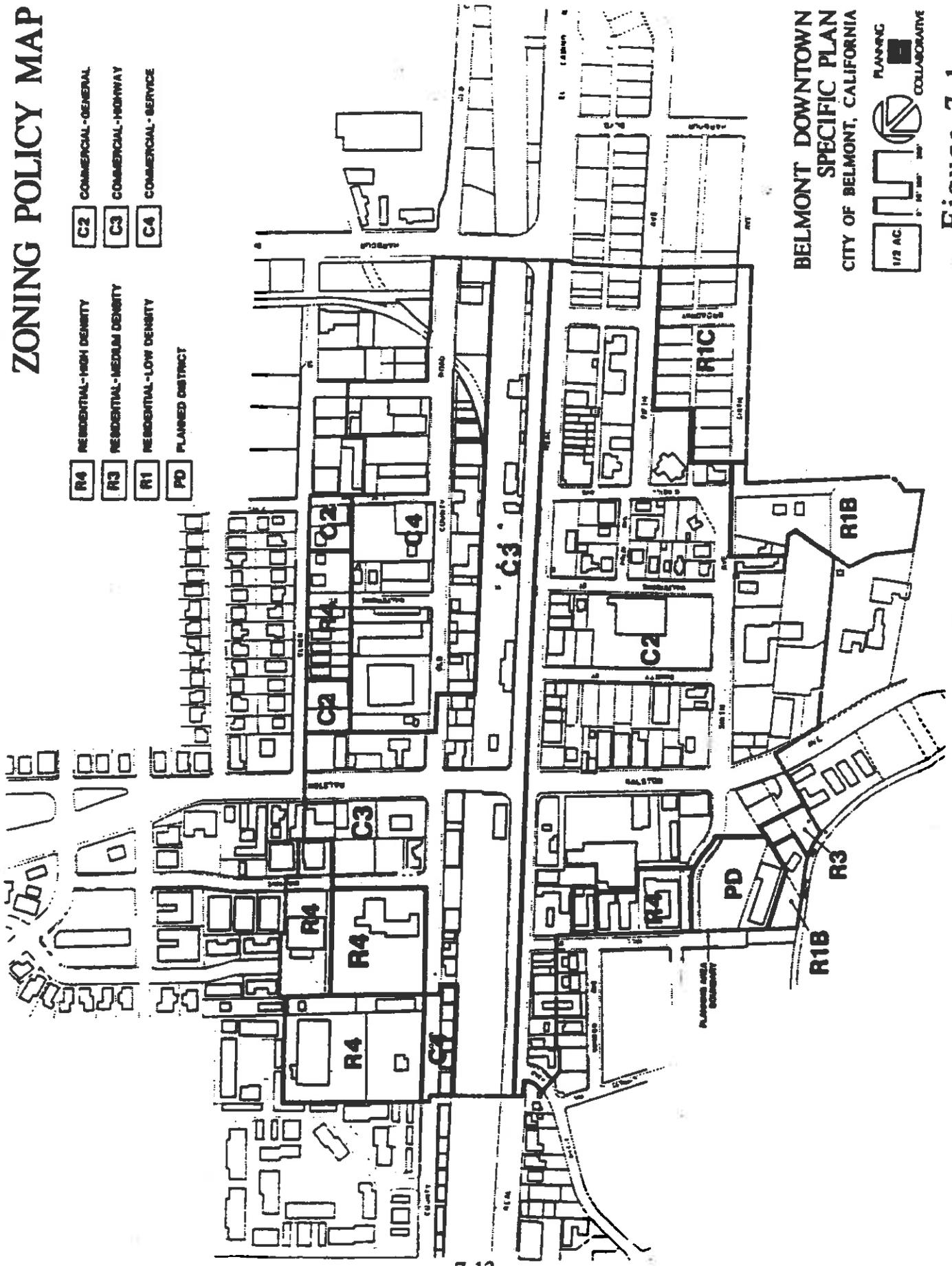
7.4.1 Phasing Program Policy. Undertake a capital improvement phasing program consisting of long-term project planning and short-term implementation measures.

Administrative Guideline. A three part phasing program will allow the City to both plan projects over the long term 10 to 15 year timeframe of this Specific Plan while implementing individual projects on a yearly basis. Proposed projects and phasing schedule are shown on the accompanying table. The program should consist of the following components.

1. **Capital Project Phasing Guide.** A 10 to 15 year phasing guide by which long-term implementation strategies for future projects are established which consider and formulate future funding sources and mechanisms, inter-governmental coordination and assistance, and other contingencies which can affect the timing and implementation of desired downtown improvements. Initially the phasing guide should be based on the implementation and phasing schedule set forth on Table 7.8.

ZONING POLICY MAP

- R4 RESIDENTIAL - HIGH DENSITY
- R3 RESIDENTIAL - MEDIUM DENSITY
- R1 RESIDENTIAL - LOW DENSITY
- PD PLANNED DISTRICT
- C2 COMMERCIAL - GENERAL
- C3 COMMERCIAL - HIGHWAY
- C4 COMMERCIAL - SERVICE



BELMONT DOWNTOWN
SPECIFIC PLAN
CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA



Figure 7.1

2. **Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.** A 2 to 5 year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) formulates specific funding and construction program actions required to meet specific facility needs for roads, water, sewer and power, streetscape, park and pedestrian improvements, and other capital projects.
3. **Annual Capital Improvement Program** A yearly capital improvement program administers the 5-year CIP by scheduling funding assistance applications, initiating project design and managing project construction. An annual review of all planned projects at the 5-year CIP level and long-term phasing guide level provides an annual update of the overall plan and promotes opportunities to implement portions of the plan as private development of the downtown occurs.

TABLE 7.8 PUBLIC/PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PHASING SCHEDULE

Policy Number	Program	Short-Term 0-5 Years	Mid-Term 5-10 Years	Long-Term 10-15 Years
	Village Center Redevelopment			
4.4.2	Village Center Streetscape	_____		
4.4.5	Ralston/ECR Landmark	_____		
3.5.7	Public Plaza	_____		
4.4.8	Pedestrian Ways	_____		
6.8.3-6.8.7	Village Center Parking	_____		
6.5.1	Turn Lane at 6th and Ralston	_____		
6.5.2	Median and Curb on Ralston	_____		
6.5.3	Re-Stripe 6th	_____		
6.5.4	Re-Stripe O'Neill	_____		
6.5.5	Central Median on El Camino	_____		
6.5.4	Signalize O'Neill	_____		
6.5.7	Signalize 6th at Emmett	_____		
6.7.1	Transit Shelters and Bus Turnouts	_____		
3.4.1-3.5.10	Redevelopment Construction	_____		
	Urban Design			
4.4.2	West Ralston Ave. Streetscape	_____		
4.4.2	East Ralston Ave. Streetscape	_____		
4.4.2	N. El Camino Real Streetscape	_____		
4.4.2	S. El Camino Real Streetscape	_____		
4.4.3	Downtown Gateways	_____		
4.4.4	Downtown Perimeter Streetscape	_____		
4.4.8	Pedestrian Ways and Linkages	_____		
4.4.7	Hillside Tree Plantings		_____	
	Transportation Improvements			
6.8.12	Parking Meter Program		_____	
6.7.2	Signal at Caltrain Depot Intersection		_____	
6.7.1	Transit Shelters and Bus Turnouts	_____		
7.4.6	Right-of-Way Reservation Along El Camino and Ralston	_____		
6.6.3	Widen El Camino Real		_____	?
6.6.2	Grade Separate Ralston		_____	?
6.6.1	Grade Separate SPRR		_____	?
	Public Infrastructure			
	Water			* _____
	Sewer			* _____
	Storm Drainage			* _____

Notes: ? = Indicates Long-Term Options, Not Policies

* = Indicates that the need for infrastructure improvements are dependent upon site specific development needs.

7.4.2 Capital Improvement Financing and Funding Source Policy. Establish a phased public investment and financing program utilizing developer, local, state and federal funding sources as available over the long term with priorities given to early actions which facilitate the Village Center project and projects which will effectively enhance the appearance of the Downtown in the short term.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. The multi-faceted capital improvement program will require use of all available sources of local, state and federal financing. However, local sources of funds and the development process will provide the major funding. The most important sources and funding techniques include the developer contribution, Redevelopment Agency tax increment financing, special assessment districts and impact fees. State and Federal grant program sources are largely confined to roadway and transit improvement projects. Table 7.9 identifies possible funding sources for proposed downtown improvements. Table 7.10 matches these potential funding sources to the downtown improvements identified in the Plan.

7.4.3 Public Services Financing and Funding Source Policy. Provide for improved maintenance and other services in the Downtown commensurate with the increased level of downtown activity and capital improvement.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. Maintenance and service operations within the Downtown today are confined to road and sidewalk repair, street trees, and garbage collection as well as police patrol and fire service. As project improvements are implemented, a greater demand on the part of the public will no doubt increase a desire for a higher level of upkeep. Developed areas such as the Village Center can be expected to provide all necessary levels of maintenance and upkeep appropriate to the image required of the developer. However, elsewhere in the Downtown it may be desirable to consider techniques which can increase overall maintenance and service levels within the Downtown without placing an added burden on the City's General Fund. The following actions should be undertaken:

1. The City should establish a Landscape and Lighting Maintenance District within the Downtown to install and maintain street trees and new street lighting required by the urban design policies. This district can be established by the City Council with the Downtown as the zone of benefit.
2. The City should evaluate establishing a special benefit district tax for properties in the Village Center sub-area utilizing the provisions of the Mello-Roos district legislation that permit an agency to identify sub-areas that benefit from improvements. Although similar to assessment districts, Mello-Roos district funds are essentially special tax entities which can be used to serve as bonds issued to finance capital facilities.

7.4.4 Transit Improvement Financing Policy. Support projects that are sponsored by SamTrans and CalTrans for improvement in local bus service and regional rail service within Belmont.

TABLE 7.9 POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

1.	Private Funding Sources	
a.	Developers Fees	Fee
b.	Conditions of Approval	Cond.
2.	Redevelopment Funding Sources	
a.	Agency Annual Cash Flow	RDF
b.	Redevelopment Corporation Funds	RDF
c.	Facade Improvement Revolving Fund	RDF
d.	Revenue Bonds	RDF
3.	Other Local Sources	
a.	Pacific Gas and Electric Underground Fund	PG&E
b.	County of San Mateo Measure A Fund	Meas. A
c.	Gas Tax Subvention	Gas Tax
d.	Assessment Districts (landscape, parking, etc.)	A. D.
4.	State Funding Sources	
a.	CalTrans	CT
b.	Public Utilities Commission, Grade Separating	PUC
5.	Federal Funding Sources	
a.	Federal Aid to Urban Fund	FAU
b.	Small Business Administration Business Loans	SBA

TABLE 7.10 POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES FOR DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS

Policy Number	Program	Private	City	State	Federal
Village Center Redevelopment					
4.4.2	Village Center Boulevard Streetscape	Cond.	RDF,AD		
4.4.5	Ralston/El Camino Real Landmark	Cond.	RDF		
3.5.7	Public Plaza	Cond.			
4.4.8	Pedestrian Ways	Cond., Fee			
6.8.3 - 6.8.7	Village Center Parking	Cond.			
6.5.1	Turn Lane at 6th and Ralston	Fee	Gas Tax		
6.5.2	Median and Curb on Ralston	Fee	Gas Tax		
6.5.3	Re-Stripe 6th	Fee	Gas Tax		
6.5.4	Re-Stripe O'Neill	Fee	Gas Tax		
6.5.5	Central Median on El Camino	Fee	RDF, AD	CT	
6.5.4	Signalize O'Neill at El Camino	Fee	RDF	CT	
6.5.7	Signalize 6th at Emmett	Fee			
6.7.1	Transit Shelters and Bus Turnouts	Fee, Cond.			
3.4.1- 3.5.10	Redevelopment Construction	Cond.			SBA
Urban Design					
4.4.2	West Ralston Ave. Blvd. Streetscape	Fee	RDF, AD		
4.4.2	East Ralston Ave. Blvd. Streetscape	Fee	RDF, AD		
4.4.2	N. El Camino Real Blvd. Streetscape	Fee	RDF, AD		
4.4.2	S. El Camino Real Blvd. Streetscape	Fee	RDF, AD		
4.4.3	Downtown Gateways		RDF		
4.4.4	Downtown Perimeter Streetscape	Fee			
4.4.8	Pedestrian Ways and Linkages	Fee	RDF		
4.4.7	Hillside Tree Plantings	Cond.			
Transportation Improvements					
6.8.12	Parking Meter Program		AD		
6.7.2	Signal at CalTrain Depot Intersection			CT	
6.7.1	Transit Shelters and Bus Turnouts	Fee			
7.4.6	Right-of-Way Reservation Along El Camino and Ralston	Fee, Cond.	RDF		
6.6.3	Widen El Camino	Meas. A, Gas Tax		CT	FAU
6.6.2	Grade Separate Ralston	Meas. A, Gas Tax		CT	FAU
6.6.1	Grade Separate SPRR	PUC, Meas. A, Gas Tax		CT	FAU
Public Infrastructure					
	Water	Fee ¹	BCWD ²		
	Sewer	Fee ¹	SCF ³		
	Storm Drainage	Fee ¹	PDF ⁴		

Notes:

1. Water and sewer hook-up fees
2. Belmont County Water District
3. Sewer Capital Facilities Fund
4. Planned Drainage Fund

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. The City should maintain an active liaison with the San Mateo Transportation Authority administering Measure A funds. The Authority is responsible for allocating revenues generated through Measure A which provide for 1/2 percent sales tax within San Mateo County as well as setting policy for projects to be funded within the County. The following actions should be taken:

1. The City should consider establishing policy with regard to supporting regional rail improvements on a priority basis. This would allow the City to obtain future scheduling for possible rail improvements which could eliminate the at-grade barrier now presented by the Southern Pacific Railroad. This would allow the City to more adequately assess long-range downtown traffic improvements and to plan future improvements for either Ralston Avenue grade separation or El Camino Real widening project.
2. Encourage developer contributions of transit shelters and bus turnouts at planned bus stops as part of the City's conditions of approval during development review.

7.4.5 Roadway Improvement Financing Policy. Employ a wide range of funding sources to implement short- and long-term roadway and traffic improvements. Evaluate the suitability of new financing techniques to supplement established sources such as traffic impact fees and traffic improvement assessment districts.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. The chief sources of roadway and traffic improvement financing will be Federal Aid Urban (FAU) funds, San Mateo County Measure A funds, Redevelopment Agency Tax Increment funds, and developer contributions. The following actions and guidelines are set forth:

1. In order to qualify for FAU funds for future long-term roadway improvement project options identified in the Circulation and Transportation Element, the City should establish a definitive project proposal and submit it to the CalTrain Region 4 for consideration and prioritization for FAU financing. This should be accomplished at the earliest possible date regardless of whether the City is prepared to make a final commitment to this option. If for instance, a Regional decision is made on elevating the railroad tracks through the City a different project option may then be preferred. However, since the FAU funding process can take 10 years or more for the City to become eligible for funding, long lead time is required to assure the availability of future federal monies.
2. Potential right-of-way for widening and undergrounding Ralston Avenue or widening El Camino Real should be preserved as opportunities permit so as to reduce future acquisition cost responsibilities of the City as required to match federal funds. (See Right-of-Way Reservation and Holding Zone Policy.)
3. Maintain liaison with CalTrans on future funding prospects for improvement of El Camino Real in the long term.
4. Interim roadway improvements identified in the Circulation and Transportation Element

should be funded through a combination of Gas Tax Subvention Funds, Tax Increment funds and developer contributions. The City should evaluate a combined funding program and establish a Financing allocation at the time of redevelopment project planning.

5. Minor traffic improvements such as new signals, turning islands, and small individual improvements should be funded through the developer contribution process to the greatest extent possible.
6. Evaluate the potential role of a traffic impact fee assessment district or applicability of similar financing techniques in the Downtown Impact fees and assessment districts may be established by ordinance and are used in various forms today by local government where the charges levied on users may be directly related to the benefit. For example, many communities in the Bay Area utilize traffic models which assess the relative contribution of various developments to localize traffic impacts as a means of allocating the cost of improvements among affected parties. This approach is in use by the City of Corte Madera, and is planned for use in the Hillsdale/Bay Meadows Specific Plan by the City of San Mateo. Santa Barbara County uses a similar approach whereas the City of Santa Barbara as well as the City of San Francisco employ a traffic impact assessment district approach as a means of paying for traffic improvements in the Downtown. In these cases, fees are assigned based on the type and amount of proposed new development.

7.4.6 Street Right-of-Way Reservation Policy. Reserve potential future right-of-way for long-term roadway improvement project options dealing with the Ralston Avenue grade separation project and the El Camino Real widening project through a combination of regulatory and property acquisition techniques.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. Regardless of the ultimate decision regarding long-term roadway improvement projects to be implemented by the City, property acquisition represents a major project cost responsibility of the City. The City has the opportunity now to reduce or offset these potential costs through a right-of-way reservation policy and program. Available techniques include establishing a building development line for new development outside required Street R.O.W. and acquiring vacant property as it becomes available for sale. The following actions should be taken:

1. A roadway setback line for future at-grade widening (and possible future depression) of Ralston Avenue should extend south of Ralston between El Camino Real and Sixth Avenue, a total distance of 10 feet south of the existing curblines; a building development setback line of 30 feet from existing curblines should be established for possible future depression of Ralston Avenue.
2. In order to facilitate possible future widening of El Camino Real to 6 lanes a 30-foot building setback east of the existing eastside curblines should extend northward 1,000 feet from the existing curb return at Ralston Avenue to Middle Road and southward approximately 1,540 feet from the southerly curb return at Ralston Avenue to Harbor Boulevard.

3. Within the area affected by the El Camino east setback line, vacant and undeveloped properties should be acquired by the City as available on the market to prevent strip development which would seriously impact the northbound traffic capacity of El Camino because of traffic generation and excessive curb cuts for vehicular access. This land could eventually form a linear park or green space contributing to the visual enhancement of the Downtown.

7.4.7 Street Tree Planting, Sidewalk Paving and Street Lighting Program Policy. Develop a public/private financing approach to Downtown street tree planting and street lighting improvements to provide a more uniform and efficient streetscape implementation program.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. The City now requires each property owner to improve the streetscape frontage with new sidewalk, street trees and tree grates (and curbs when necessary). The approach is sometimes burdensome for individual property owners yet has resulted in steady, if somewhat fragmented, frontage improvements throughout the Downtown. The streetscape improvement could be implemented more successfully and with greater equity among property owners if a master improvement program were undertaken on a phased block-by-block basis.

A coordinated approach which includes installation of irrigation for street trees and new lighting (in conjunction with the lighting undergrounding program of PG&E) would allow construction of complete block faces or continuous streets utilizing a master design plan and financing mechanism which allows property owners to share in the cost. Costs could be allocated based on a frontage assessment for each property, with supporting funding for project design and engineering by the Redevelopment Agency. This approach is particularly applicable where numerous property owners are present on a street or block frontage. In other areas where a single property owner may own all or most of a block frontage, the City may continue to use a property owner installation condition or fee approach similar to the current program. In either case, the program should be broadened to include improved planting details and irrigation and street lighting. The following actions should be taken:

1. Prepare detailed standards for street trees, lighting, sidewalks, new curb and gutter installation and power line undergrounding that may be implemented on a phased basis.
2. Establish a financing program which combines Redevelopment Agency funds, assessment district and development application fees and other applicable sources of funding to sustain program implementation.
3. Prepare a streetscape phasing program based on the design plan and financing plan established above consistent with the phasing program shown in Figure 7.2. Establish a process whereby properties which may not be located in areas anticipated for early improvement phases may be improved by a property owner in lieu of future fee contributions if the size of the property frontage is in excess of 100 feet.

7.4.8 Park Linkage Policy. Implement a dedicated public pedestrian linkage between the

Village Center project in the Downtown and Twin Pines Park.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. Develop a definitive improvement plan and landscape design for a pedestrian linkage from the park to the Village Center including all necessary easements and rights-of-way. The full design treatment of paving, landscaping, arbor work and signage should be undertaken by the Redevelopment Agency.

7.4.9 Building Facade Improvement Program Policy. Establish an area-wide facade improvement program that provides improvement loan resounds, enables the design process and promotes the involvement of property owners and private businesses in the upgrading of the Downtown.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. Numerous cities in California have undertaken facade improvement programs in their downtowns with mixed results. Where these have been successful, local property owners have had easy access to improvement loan funding, design services and improved permit processing and have followed a coordinated plan of design objectives including the use of color, materials and design theme. The following actions should be undertaken:

1. Establish a local revolving loan fund through the participation of local lending institutions to ensure the availability of conventional financing. Loans can be made available for specified levels of facade improvement including paint up/fix up, moderate repair and redesign, and major renovations required in extreme cases. Loan repayments are used to replenish the fund. Favorable interest rates should be negotiated by the Redevelopment Agency which may use the leverage capacities of the Agency to guarantee payments of approved applicants.
2. Establish a building design services program to facilitate the facade improvement program. This could range from creating a list of approved designers whose work is reviewed and judged by the Redevelopment Agency to be appropriate to the caliber required or to providing these services directly through a minimum fee or free to eligible building owners.

Guidelines for buildings to be admitted to the program should include their compatibility with the objectives and policies of the Specific Plan and Redevelopment Plan.

7.4.10 Public Infrastructure Improvement Policy. Incremental modifications and improvements to the sanitary sewer and storm drainage systems provided by the City, water system provided by the Belmont County Water District, electrical and gas systems provided PG&E and cable systems should be implemented on a project-by-project basis as new development requires.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. Except for planned storm drainage improvements in the Downtown area, no other major sanitary sewer or water system improvements are contemplated to be required to serve Downtown growth. Sanitary sewer service collection is provided by the City of Belmont and treatment and disposal is provided by the South Bayside System Authority. Water supply and distribution is provided by the Belmont County Water District While overall system capacities are judged by the City's Public Services Department as adequate to serve the Plan, specific improvements will be required on a block-by-block basis depending upon the location of new buildings, size and land use. All improvements should be phased and would be coordinated with the actual building schedule as would project planning and cost estimates. Generally, these improvements should be identified at the initiation of project planning and should be provided for as conditions of development. All infrastructure improvements should be coordinated with the utility underground program of PG&E.

7.5 REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM POLICIES

Downtown Belmont falls within the City's redevelopment area and is governed by the Redevelopment Plan of 1981 as amended. As such, a broad range of implementation capabilities are available to the City to achieve full implementation of the Plan. The Agency is empowered to acquire, manage property, relocate businesses and people, prepare site redevelopment, develop property and facilities, sell land and rent property. It may acquire land by purchase, lease, gift or eminent domain.

The City of Belmont Redevelopment Agency was established in 1981 with a 35-year life. Although the Agency has a broad range of powers and many techniques available to it which enhance the Agency's capacity as a primary force of implementation of the Downtown Plan, some potential limitations should be noted. These include: 1) the agreement with the school district which reserves bonding capacity for possible school district revenues; 2) a 15-year self-imposed limitation on borrowing (after 1996 the Agency can no longer take out loans or incur indebtedness); 3) a cap on total tax increment financing capacity of \$50 million; 4) \$20 million bonded indebtedness limit. While these limitations may be changed by the Agency, they effectively result in a great dependence upon annual cash flow as a major source of project funding and leverage.

Although legislatively more restricted than comparable Redevelopment Agencies, the Agency's financial resources can have a wide-ranging impact on Downtown development and revitalization. The Agency can initiate projects by providing initial seed money and project advances which are recoverable on a revolving basis as replaced by private sector investment. The Agency can attract support from banks by providing loan guarantees through loan insurance or public loan

contributions. These approaches can reduce the cost of financing by reducing the risk to the provider and thus enhancing project feasibility.

As a financial participant or partner in future redevelopment projects, the Agency can utilize the weight of its annual cash flow to back loans to a private sector redevelopment partner. The Agency may also consider more entrepreneurial approaches by which the Agency leases land or improvements in exchange for project returns. For example, approaches such as this have been utilized successfully by the City of Fairfield Redevelopment Agency at the Solano Mall Regional Shopping Center.

The most important role the Agency can play as a catalyst in the redevelopment process can be in providing the leadership and staff support the redevelopment process requires. No action will result from the failure of the Agency to provide the necessary staff resources required by the multifaceted work program envisioned by this Plan. A typical failing of downtown revitalization programs in their early years has been a penny wise and pound foolish reluctance to fund the Agency's staffing needs. This often occurs where private sector financial support is anticipated for development projects. Without staff, such projects are slow to get off the ground because the Agency lacks the manpower to initiate and coordinate the activities of the Agency. Where redevelopment agencies realize their best investment can be in staffing, early success leads to quicker returns and an accelerated investment process in public and private redevelopment efforts.

OBJECTIVE:

THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY SHOULD USE ITS INFLUENCE AND CAPABILITIES IN FACILITATING A PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO ACHIEVING DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT GOALS, PLANS AND PROJECTS.

POLICIES:

7.5.1 Village Center Redevelopment. The Redevelopment Agency should take an active role in the implementation of the Village Center project and should focus its efforts and capabilities in this area.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. The following activities should comprise a first year action program for the Redevelopment Agency in initiating and leading a major redevelopment effort for the Village Center project. The Agency should establish a joint public/private partnership approach which maximizes private investment and project implementation capabilities. The Agency should seek to leverage its financial resources and powers to support and organize an efficient program of private sector involvement. Above all, the redevelopment process must be approached as a very interactive and challenging activity which requires a great range of flexibility and creativity in meeting the needs of the private sector. The following chronology of activities is envisioned for the Agency in the Village Center.

1. Promote an early action program for the supermarket block portion of the Village Center

project by facilitating acquisition of remaining properties not owned by Safeway fronting on El Camino Real. Once these properties are acquired, undertake a design development and project negotiation process with Safeway as a partner in this portion of the core area Plan.

2. The Agency should initiate a developer recruitment process using a development prospectus and request for development proposals to package the real estate program in a way that generates maximum developer interest. The development prospectus should be based on the land use policies and development guidelines set forth in the Village Center section of the Specific Plan.
3. Once a developer is selected, a project design, public improvement and project development program should be negotiated with the first place developer. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Agency should terminate negotiations and initiate new negotiations with the second place developer team.
4. In parallel with the above, the Redevelopment Agency should initiate pre-acquisition negotiations with individual property owners to obtain purchase options and first rights of refusal.
5. After successful completion of a project development agreement, the City should exercise acquisition agreements for the remaining properties. Those properties which cannot be negotiated or will require "friendly" or other uses of eminent domain will proceed through standard redevelopment acquisition procedures.
6. Simultaneously with the City's property purchase and acquisition activities, the City and developer could cooperate in establishing construction and property mortgage loan agreements with a real estate investment bank. With financing arranged, property acquisition should be completed and title passed to a joint City/Developer corporate partner entity or fully to the developer through a purchase and development agreement.
7. During the interim time period that the City has acted as a property owner, the Redevelopment Agency could rent to existing business tenants as relocation of tenants takes place. With full acquisition of all properties the developer should manage the rental and relocation phasing process until project development is undertaken.
8. The Agency shall specify in any disposition and development agreement executed with Safeway Inc. that construction on Block 1 of Village Center (the Safeway block) shall be phased to create opportunity for relocation of tenants displaced by redevelopment within the Village Center.

The Agency shall review the financial feasibility of any Village Center project requiring substantial assistance and subsidy by the Redevelopment Agency by establishing financial feasibility checkpoints. At each checkpoint during the implementation process, the Agency shall determine whether or not to proceed with the project. The checkpoints shall consist of the

following:

1. Completion of preliminary land and building appraisal and tenant relocation cost estimates.
2. Completion of requests for proposals from the development community to determine level of interest in participating in a program of redevelopment for the Village Center area.
3. Completion of a detailed and definitive appraisal study evaluating the specific tenant by tenant relocation costs associated with the redevelopment proposal.
4. Negotiation of a disposition and development agreement(s).

If at any of the above four checkpoints the Agency determines whether -- (1) the project is not financially feasible; or (2) there is insufficient interest from the development community to warrant proceeding with the project, then the Agency shall adopt a resolution stating the reasons why the project is not feasible and transmit this resolution to the City Council. Said resolution shall request the Council to amend the portion of the Downtown Specific Plan applicable to Block 2 in such a fashion as to cause the Plan to be within the reasonably expected fiscal capabilities of the Redevelopment Agency.

7.5.2 General Downtown Redevelopment Activities Policy. Redevelopment powers and capabilities should be employed elsewhere in the Downtown on a case-by-case basis to facilitate implementation of downtown policies and programs.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. The Redevelopment Agency can have a wide ranging role throughout the Downtown which is not limited by its tax increment funding capability or bonding capacity. The Agency can serve a lead role in promoting and recruiting private development.

Investors throughout the Downtown, can promote early action on capital improvement projects, and can assist in property acquisition for traffic and parking improvements and similar projects especially where early action is required. The following actions should be considered:

1. Conduct an annual review of potential redevelopment areas of interest outside the Village Center area and identify those activities and projects appropriate to the scope and capacities of the Agency.

7.5.3 Redevelopment Agency Staff Policy. Staffing positions necessary to undertake the redevelopment activities provided by the Plan should be undertaken by the Agency.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. The Agency should review its departmental needs in implementing a dynamic downtown redevelopment process. The City Manager should prepare an organizational plan for Redevelopment Agency staff which sets forth lines of responsibility and relationships to other City departments, and staffing requirements. Staff skills will be necessary in areas of development implementation and financing, as well as project coordination in

administering day-to-day program functions, liaison with citizen groups, landowners and businesses, other City departments and others active in the revitalization program.

1. The City should establish a new staff position of Redevelopment Coordinator whose responsibility will be to participate in all phases of redevelopment activities. The Agency will review its staffing needs and endeavor to achieve the full staff support the redevelopment process requires.
2. Downtown promotion activities initiation and coordination should be made a key responsibility of Redevelopment Agency staff. This role should be responsible for providing leadership in downtown promotion and business activities to unify merchants and property owners.

Activities can include recruitment of outside businesses and investors, joint merchandising and special commercial promotions, and staging of special community events.

3. Downtown assistance by Redevelopment Agency staff should also be provided to counsel local property owners, businesses and tenants where use of eminent domain in the acquisition of redevelopment properties requires relocation. The role here should be to inform and assist businesses in obtaining all required relocation benefits and assistance provided by redevelopment law to reduce any difficulties which may be brought on by redevelopment activities.

7.5.4 Use of Redevelopment Powers Policy. The Redevelopment Agency shall fully utilize all powers and capabilities allowed by State Redevelopment Law and should seek creative applications of its powers to implement the Downtown Belmont Specific Plan.

Administrative Guidelines and Actions. Although the Belmont Redevelopment Agency has several self-imposed limitations on its financial capabilities including limitations on bonding, borrowing, indebtedness and tax increment financing capacity, the wide-ranging powers of the Agency should be fully employed to serve the citizens of Belmont.

The Agency's tools are especially well-suited to a variety of arrangements involving a partnership between the public and private sectors. Creative approaches to the entire redevelopment process of land acquisition and assembly, project capitalization and financing, project development and disposition, project operations and management whether for land use development, a parking lot, or capital facilities, can benefit from shared public and private roles. In many cases the Agency will be required to be the public initiator of private actions or will be required to act in support of private initiatives. For instance, it may not be necessary for the Agency to use eminent domain for land acquisition in those areas where a developer may already be in the process of assembling land for private redevelopment as consistent with the Land Use and Design Guidelines set forth by the Plan. However, the Agency may choose to exercise eminent domain where additional property assembly may enhance development and further the goals of the Plan. (The exercise of eminent domain is a legal process whereby local government may acquire property under rules which ensure that the purchase is made at fair market value and that payments may be made to

tenants to be relocated from occupied properties.) Those properties which cannot be negotiated or will require "friendly" or other uses of eminent domain will be subject to the requirements of community redevelopment law. Under this law, the City Redevelopment Authority would be required to assist all persons, businesses and others who are displaced by public redevelopment actions in finding other locations and facilities, and would also be required to make relocation payments for moving expenses and direct losses of personal property. The following actions should be undertaken:

1. The Redevelopment Agency should identify and evaluate those creative public financing mechanisms and arrangements in use by other agencies throughout the state which may be applicable to the implementation of the Specific Plan.
2. The Agency shall use the power of eminent domain when it is necessary to implement this plan, especially in the Village Center.

8.0 References and Background Documents

8.0 REFERENCES AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

As has been previously described, a great deal of effort has been devoted to the planning for and revitalization of downtown Belmont. The following documents describe this planning process and should be referenced for background information.

- Belmont, California, The General Plan. City of Belmont, August 24, 1982
- Preliminary Belmont Downtown Concept, Final Report. Amphion Environmental Inc., July, 1986
- Belmont Market Analysis Working Paper. Economic and Planning Systems, September, 1987
- Downtown Belmont Revitalization Study. Economic and Planning Systems, February 23, 1988
- Belmont Zoning Ordinance. City of Belmont, October 31, 1988
- Belmont Downtown Plan Interim Decisions Report. The Planning Collaborative, July, 1988

Working Maps

- Existing Parking Space Inventory, October, 1988
- Existing Land Use Inventory and Parcel Identification, October, 1988
- Visual Analysis Field Notes, October, 1988
- Current Extent of Bomanite Use, December, 1988
- Streetscape Analysis, Storefront Conditions, August, 1988

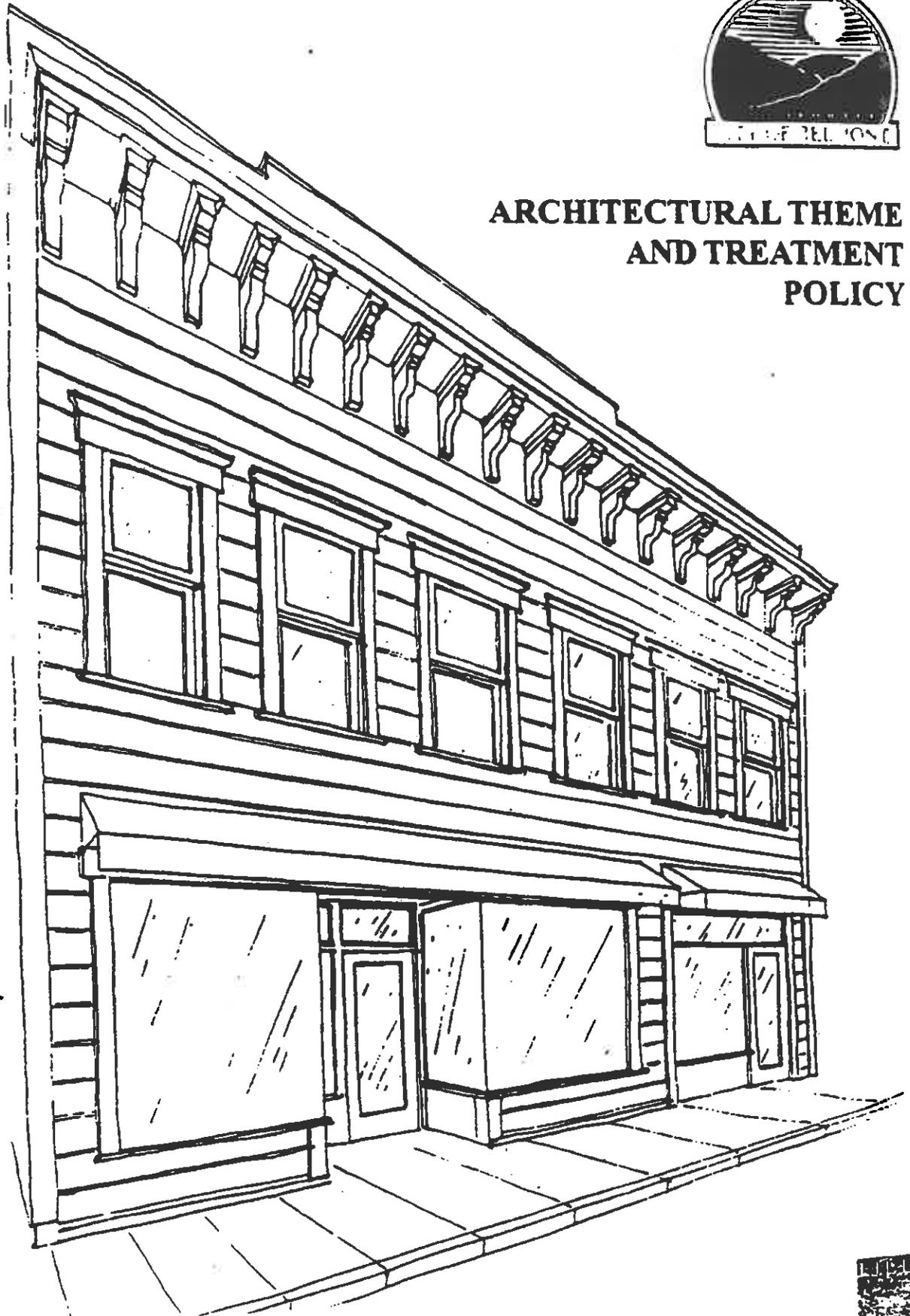
Background Reports

- Draft Environmental Impact Report on the Downtown Belmont Specific Plan, The Planning Collaborative, August, 1989
- Legal Analysis of Housing Obligations and Opportunities of the Belmont Redevelopment Agency, Goldfarb and Lipman, July, 1988
- Alternatives for the Use of the Belmont Redevelopment Agency's Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund, Community Economics, June, 1988
- Los Costaños Community Development Plan, November, 1981
- Plan Report for the Los Costaños Community Development Project Area, November, 1981

Copies of all of these are available in the Community Development Department, Belmont City Hall



ARCHITECTURAL THEME AND TREATMENT POLICY



3. Architectural Goals and Objectives (Replaces Architectural Theme and Appearance objective on page 4.5)

A distinct architectural theme for the downtown and commercial areas along the El Camino/Ralston axis should be based on one coordinated design theme to distinguish Belmont from surrounding communities and create a sense of a unified downtown area. The architectural style should be based upon use of historic forms and build on the existing inventory of buildings that are either historic buildings or new buildings with historic elements.

In 1997 the Downtown Task Force recommended a cohesive architectural design theme for the commercial areas downtown and along El Camino, Old County Road, and Ralston corridors. The Task Force found that the prior use of multiple theme zones did not support creating a unified sense of place for the main commercial part of Belmont nor did it help define an area that could be considered Downtown Belmont. The Task Force recommended utilization of one unified theme from city border to city border along the El Camino, and the use of a common architectural palette would help define Belmont's commercial area as unique from other cities and help define the limits of the downtown area.

4.6 ARCHITECTURAL THEME OBJECTIVE (Revised)

A distinct architectural image for the Downtown should be based on a cohesive theme of building styles derived from the architectural heritage of Downtown Belmont. Creative architectural design should be encouraged to utilize historic forms in traditional and attractive ways.

4.6.1 Historic Architectural Theme Zone Policies (New)

The Historic Architectural Theme Zone is established to govern the architectural style of commercial, office, residential and institutional buildings. The limits of this zone are shown in Figure 4.4. This architectural theme is intended to identify Downtown Belmont by creating and maintaining a cohesive architectural image, which reflects the heritage of Belmont and the types of buildings that are currently being built within the downtown. Theme zone standards are devised to ensure compatibility and united yet diverse, building forms and styles. The historic theme is associated with, and intended to augment, established styles in the downtown area such as Italianate, Shingle, Craftsman, Spanish Colonial Revival, Late Victorian, Edwardian and Bungalow styles. Each of these styles has characteristic features associated with the detailing and ornamentation of roofs, eaves, facades, columns, windows and doors and distinct relationships between the building and the ground plane. Innovative interpretations of historical styles and incorporation of "sustainable design" principles are encouraged within the context of the Historic Architectural Theme Zone.

4.6.2 Historical Architecture Theme Zone (New)

The architectural style of the Historic Architectural Theme Zone is based upon traditional building elements, proportions and construction techniques. The buildings will reflect the detailing and craftsmanship of American architecture between 1880-1930. The building façades may be finished in wood, cement plaster, masonry or a combination of these materials. The building shall be articulated to reflect the traditional development patterns of twenty-five to fifty foot wide lots within the downtown area. The overall goal of the design guidelines is to create buildings whose proportions, rhythms and details are based on traditional American architectural styles. These buildings need not be direct imitations of these styles, but their architectural elements and devices must respect the proportions, craftsmanship and materials of historical buildings. See Figures 4.5 - 4.8 for examples of appropriate historic buildings.

FIGURE 4.5

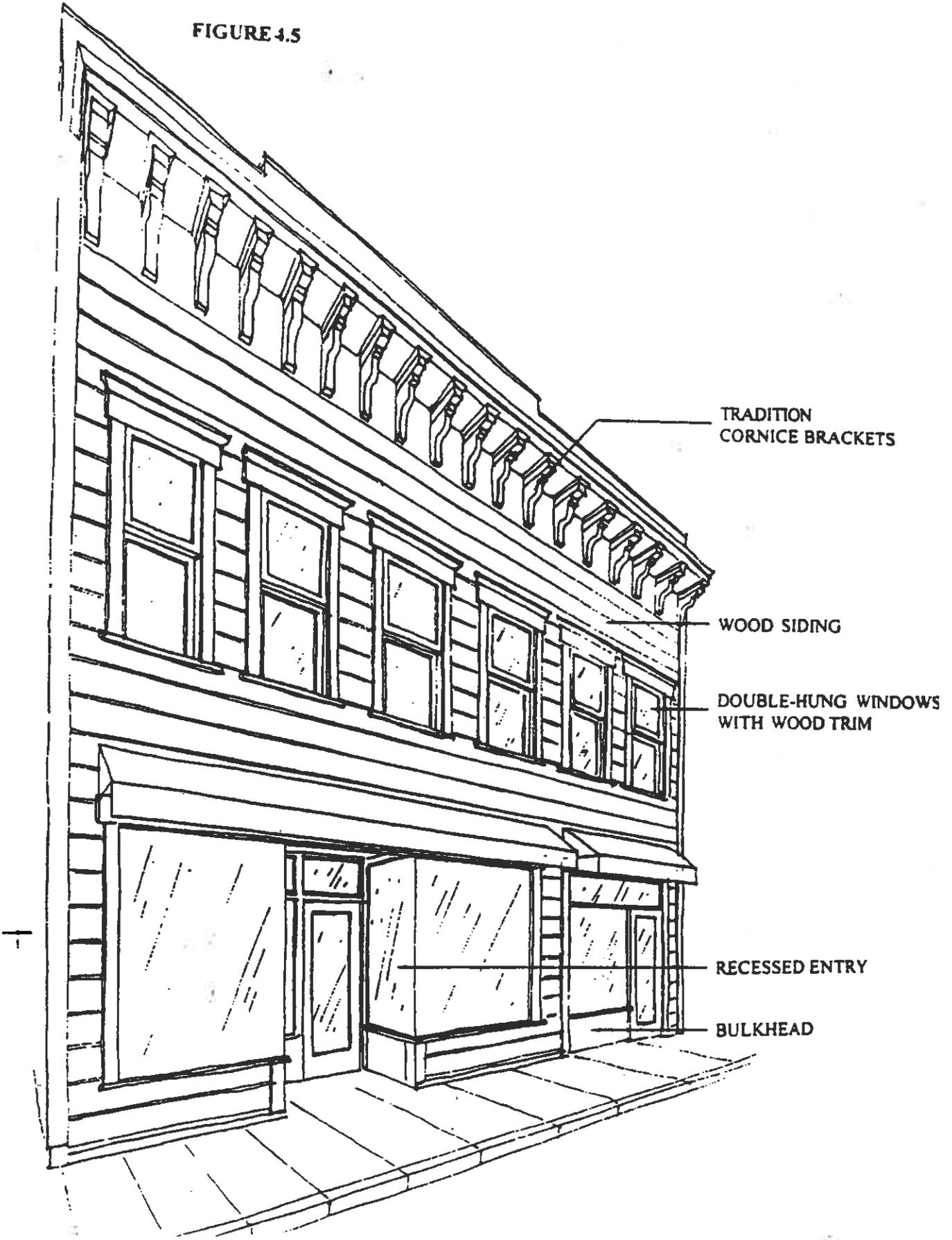


FIGURE 4.6

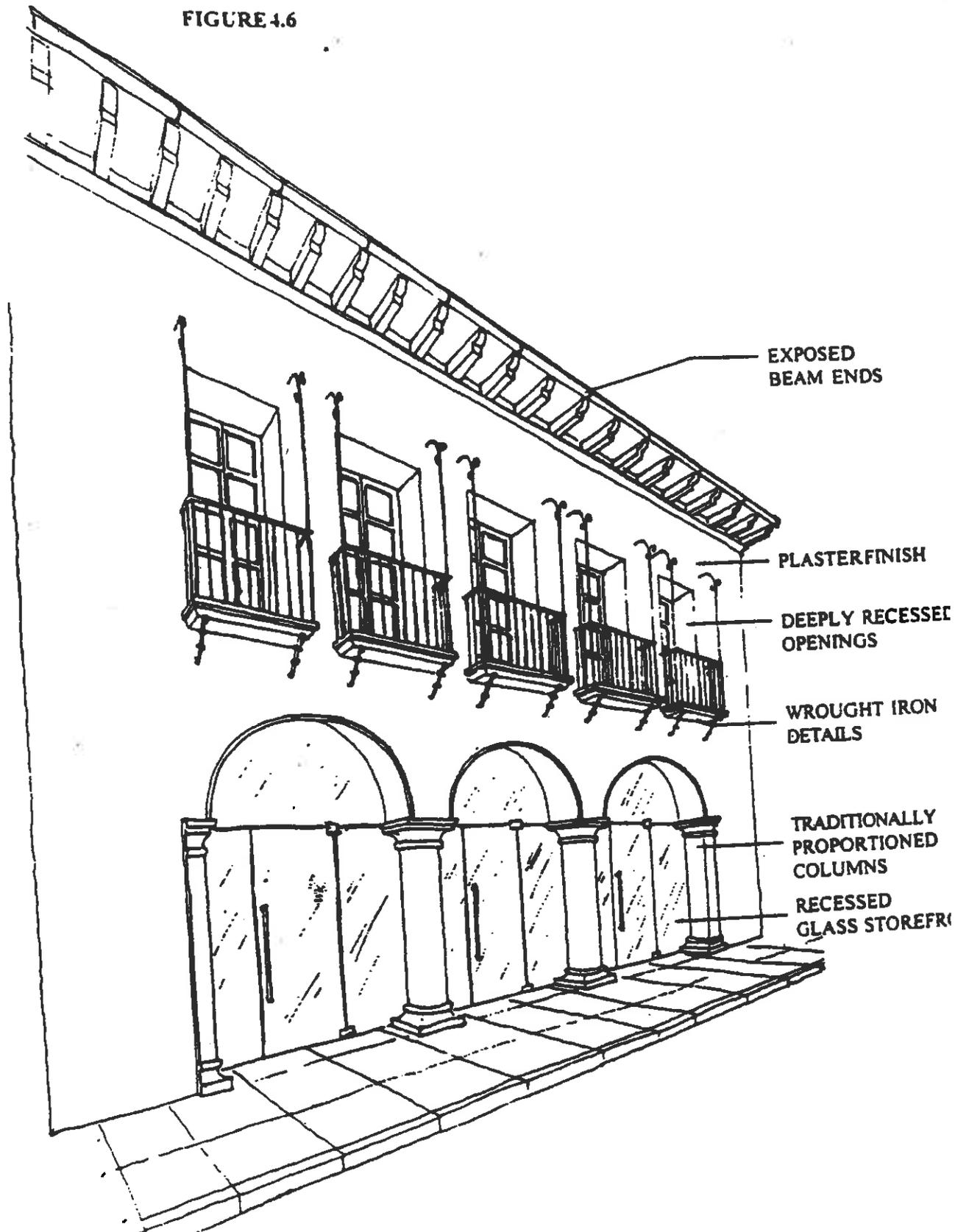


FIGURE 4.7

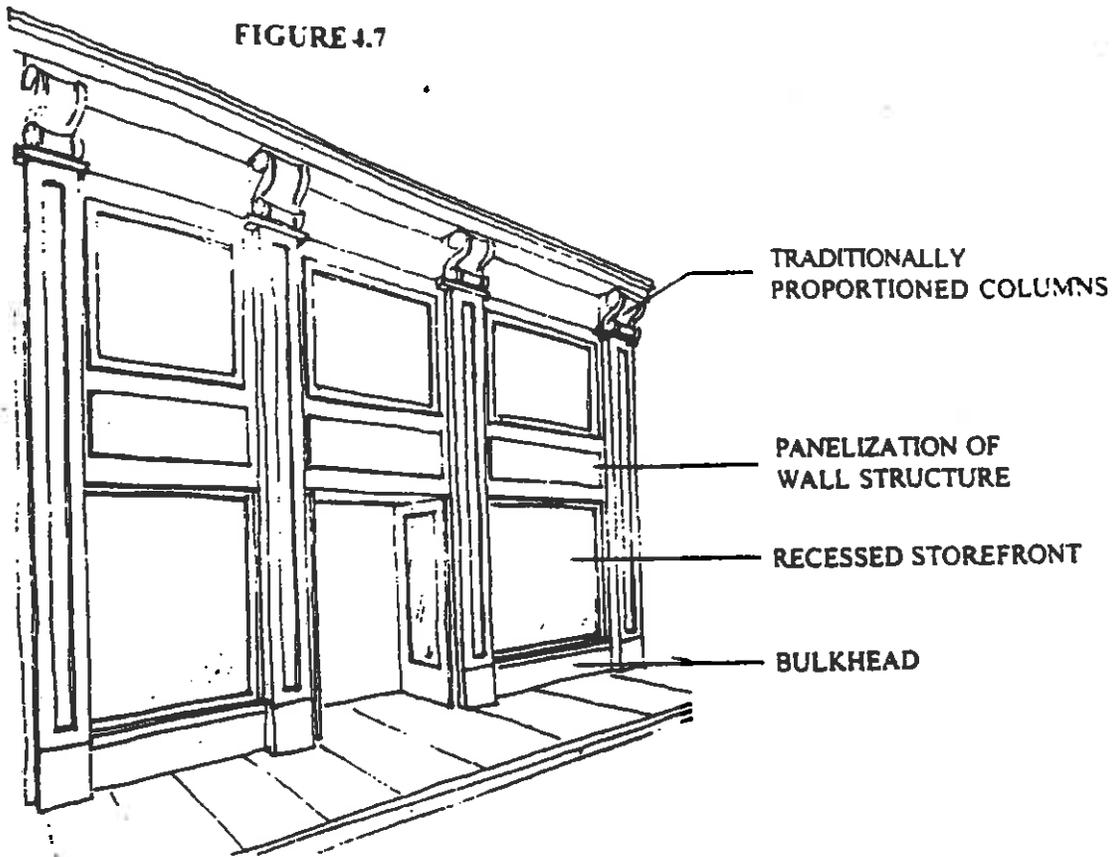
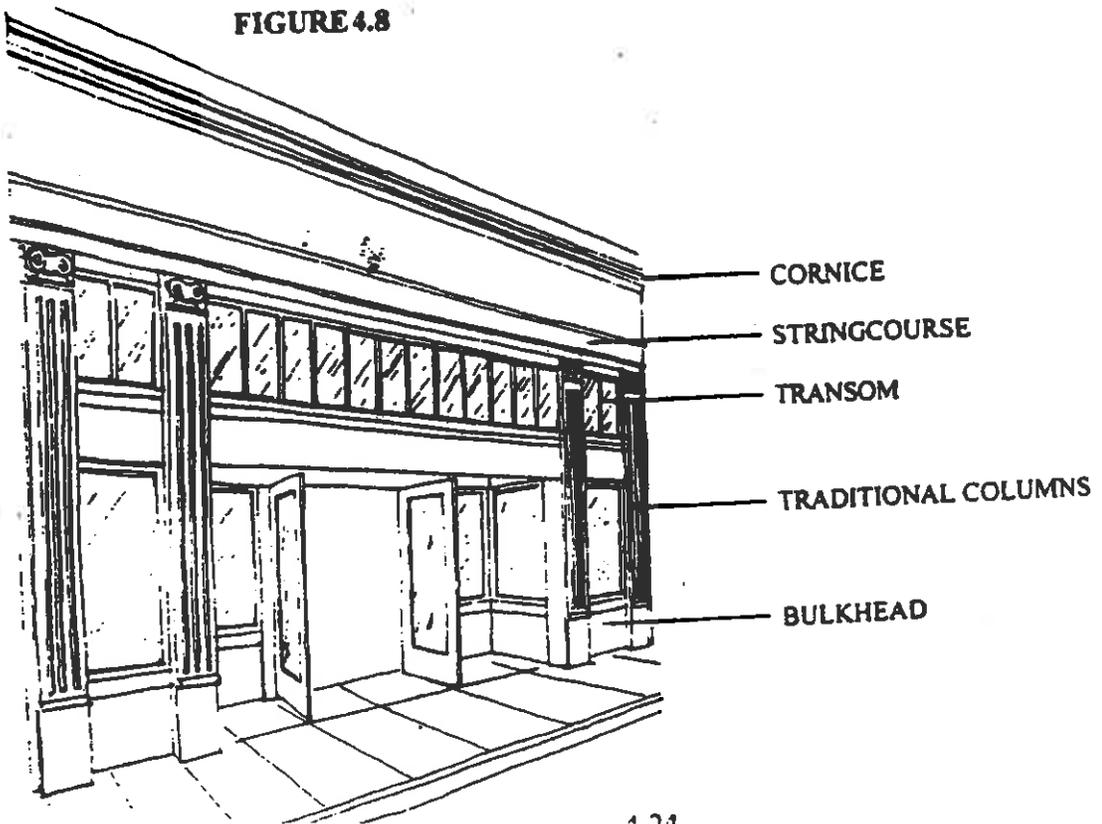


FIGURE 4.8



4.6.2 Historic Architectural Theme Zone Design Guidelines (New)

The following design guidelines are set forth and demonstrated in the figures accompanying the policies.

A. Siting Design

1. All freestanding fencing shall be subject to review and approval by the City, and materials, textures and colors shall be consistent with adjacent buildings.
2. Trash, service and utility closets and enclosures shall be designed as an integral part of the building. All enclosing gates shall be solid.
3. No chain link or rough-wood appearance fencing shall be permitted.

B. Building Design

I. Required Design Elements

1. All building facades shall be expressed as a balanced composition, both vertically and horizontally, utilizing traditional proportions of design elements.
2. Buildings shall be articulated in twenty-five to fifty foot increments to be consistent with traditional development patterns in the downtown.
3. Subdivisions of display windows shall be consistent with the area's historical period buildings. Where large expanses of glass are utilized on the ground level, small paned transoms are required above, and a bulkhead with a minimum dimension of 18" is required below. Mullionless, all glass, storefront systems will be considered if recessed a minimum of one foot from the building plane.
4. Bay rhythms shall be consistent throughout the façade, not haphazardly placed.
5. Subdivisions within bays shall also be regularly modulated and consistent with historic styles.
6. All decorative elements such as awnings, signage or lighting shall be integrated within the building composition and shall be detailed to be compatible with the historic style.
7. All entrances shall be readily identifiable and articulated with enhanced architectural elements. Recessed entrances are encouraged.
8. Rear entrances shall follow the Guidelines for front entrances.
9. Bulkheads shall be eighteen (18) inches minimum height. Any of the discussed building materials will be permitted, including wood siding, providing traditional detailing is used.
10. All buildings shall have integrated equipment screening.
11. All hip roofs shall have eave overhangs proportionate to the architectural style of the building. Mansard roofs shall provide slopes no steeper than 1:1 to provide the illusion of a hip roof. Flat roof finishes using white or reflective materials shall be avoided.

II. Prohibited Design Elements

1. **Narrow stile doors or anodized aluminum storefronts shall not be permitted.**
2. **Security bars, if needed, shall not be mounted on the exterior of the building, unless integrated with the historic character and consistent with the traditional style (i.e. wrought iron gates on Spanish Colonial Revival buildings).**
3. **No exposed conduit, utility brackets or wiring is allowed. All existing exposed conduits and brackets shall be removed during the implementation of the approved improvements.**

C. Materials

I. Required Materials

1. **Building designs shall be expressed as wood, cement plaster, masonry or concrete load-bearing buildings appropriate to the historic era: horizontal wood siding, shingles, brick, cut or carved monumental stone, terracotta or decorative stone are examples of allowed building materials.**
2. **Material substitutes will be considered during project review (fiberglass columns, tin cornices, elements contributing to sustainable design, etc.), however, traditional proportions, detailing and intent shall be maintained. Any improvements, restoration or new construction shall accurately duplicate traditional original details, or reinterpret these details using traditional proportions and materials.**
3. **Sashes shall be wood or steel, consistent to the historical period. Mullionless, all-glass, storefront systems will be considered if recessed a minimum of one foot from the building plane. Aluminum storefronts shall not be permitted. Doors shall be wood or steel.**
4. **Cement plaster finishes are required to have a smooth steel trowel finish. Substitute hand trowelled finishes will be considered during project review, provided that they are consistent with historic plaster finishes.**
5. **All transoms shall be glazed with transparent or translucent glass.**
6. **Buildings that are to be residential in character shall appear to be constructed of wood, brick or stone. Exterior finishes shall be painted horizontal wood siding, face brick, stone veneer or smooth textured cement plaster (limited to specific design idioms).**
7. **Roof coverings visible from adjacent streets may be wood shingles, slate shingles, clay tile caps and pans (limited to specific design idioms) or composition shingles.**
8. **Marquees, canopies, awnings and material substitutes will be permitted provided that traditional proportions, textures, finishes and intent are maintained.**

II. Prohibited Materials

1. Exposed rough wood siding and trim shall not be permitted.
2. Exterior Insulating Finish Systems (EIFS) shall not be permitted.
3. Aluminum storefronts shall not be permitted.
4. No tinted or reflective glass shall be permitted. Translucent or stained glass shall be consistent with the historic period.
5. Contemporary roll-up service doors are not permitted.
6. Aluminum, steel, fiberglass and plastic awnings or canopies shall not be permitted.

D. Colors

1. Bright, intense primary colors are not permitted.
2. Accent colors utilized for awnings, detail stripes, and dentils shall be muted and harmonize with overall project colors.

E. Lighting

1. No fluorescent lighting shall be allowed within eight feet from the storefront. No rotating, blinking, animated, or flashing lights shall be permitted.
2. Exterior lighting and fixtures shall be compatible with the historic character of the buildings.

F. Signage

1. No signs with changeable copy shall be permitted except for gasoline service stations, movie theaters, and places of large public gatherings.
2. All signs shall be designed for visual communication to pedestrians and slow-moving vehicular traffic on side streets.
3. No internally illuminated signs shall be permitted.

G. Village Center and Abutting Blocks Special Requirements

Within those blocks designated Village Center and the blocks immediately abutting to the North across Ralston Avenue, the West across Sixth Avenue, and to the South across Waltermire Street the use of cement plaster exterior materials shall be limited to building accents only and not be the predominant exterior material. The architecture shall avoid Spanish, colonial revival, Italianate, and Mediterranean themes and utilize Shingle, Craftsman, Late Victorian, Edwardian, and Bungalow styles.

G. Architectural Elements

1. Storefronts

Storefronts may be expressed as individual windows (see Section 3. Windows) or as a more continuous areas of glass. Where storefronts have continuous areas of glass, the glazing must be broken up into vertically proportioned units or have transom panels above. Glazing must be recessed a minimum of four inches (4") from the plane of the storefront. A stringcourse above the storefront system is required to separate the storefront from the building mass above where storefronts have continuous areas of glazing. Mullionless, all-glass storefront systems will be considered if recessed a minimum of one foot from the building plane. See Figures 4.9-4.12.

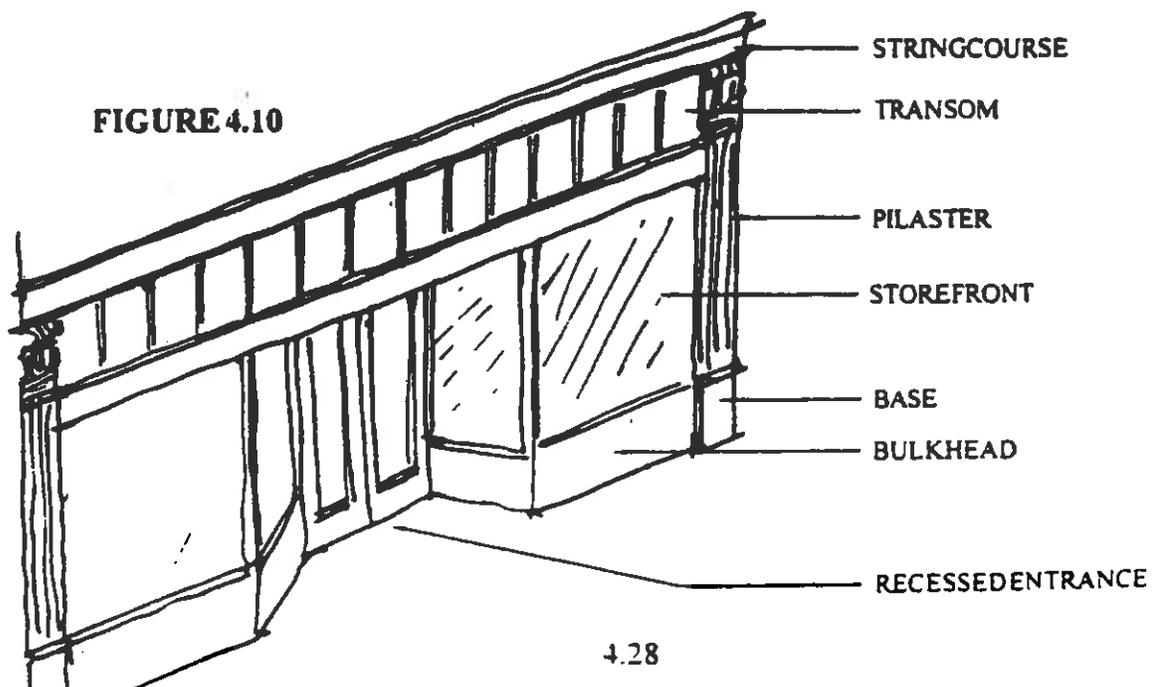
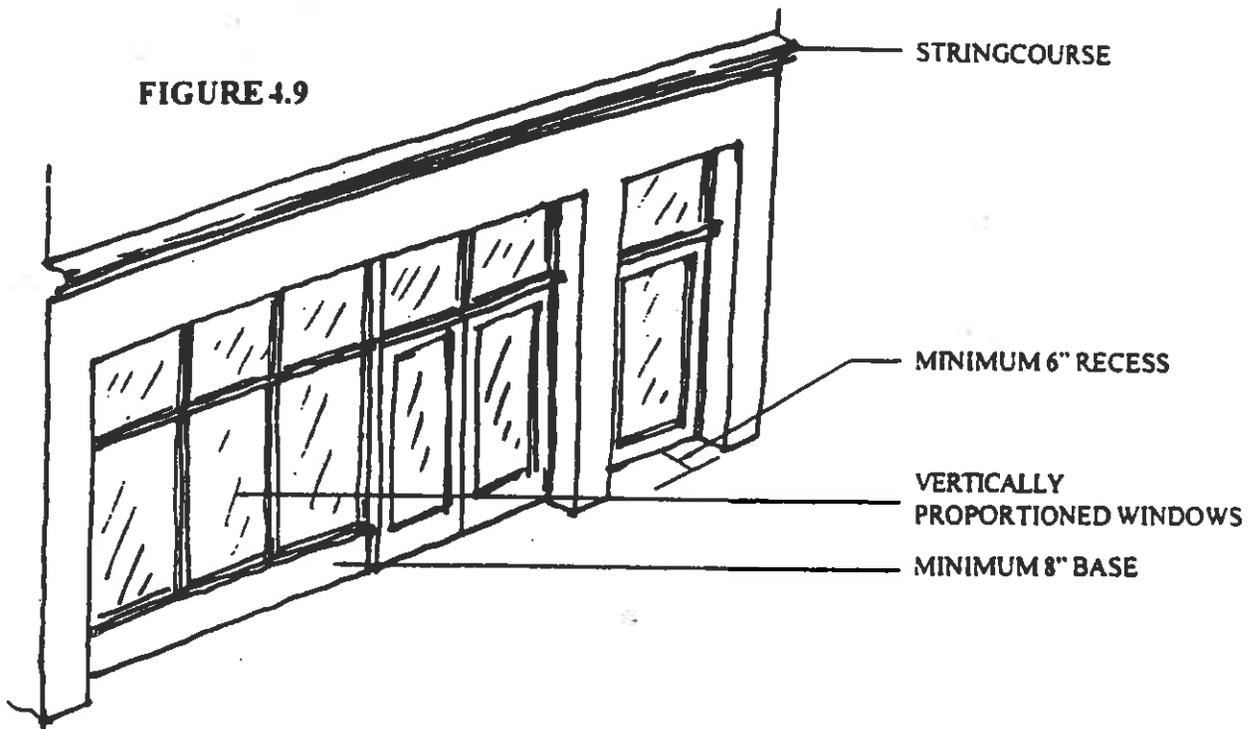


FIGURE 4.11

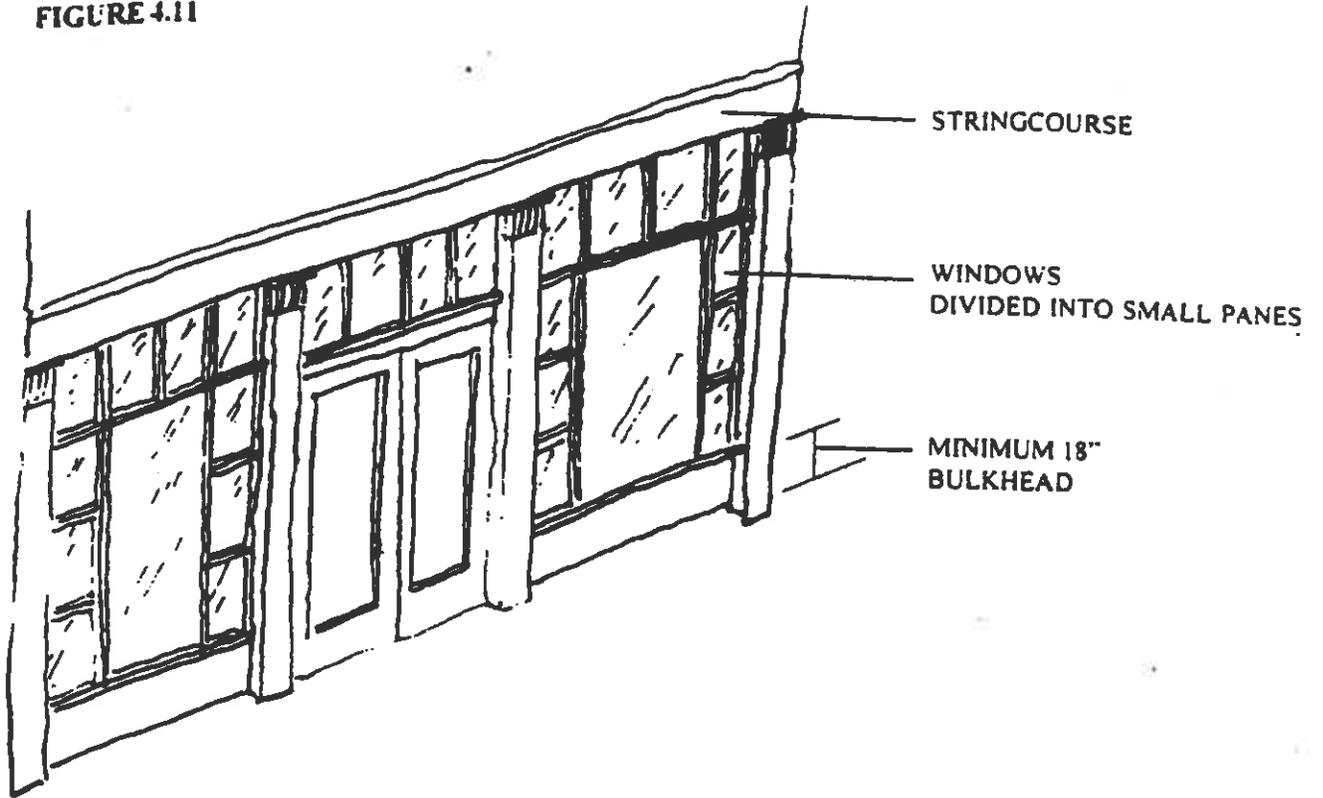
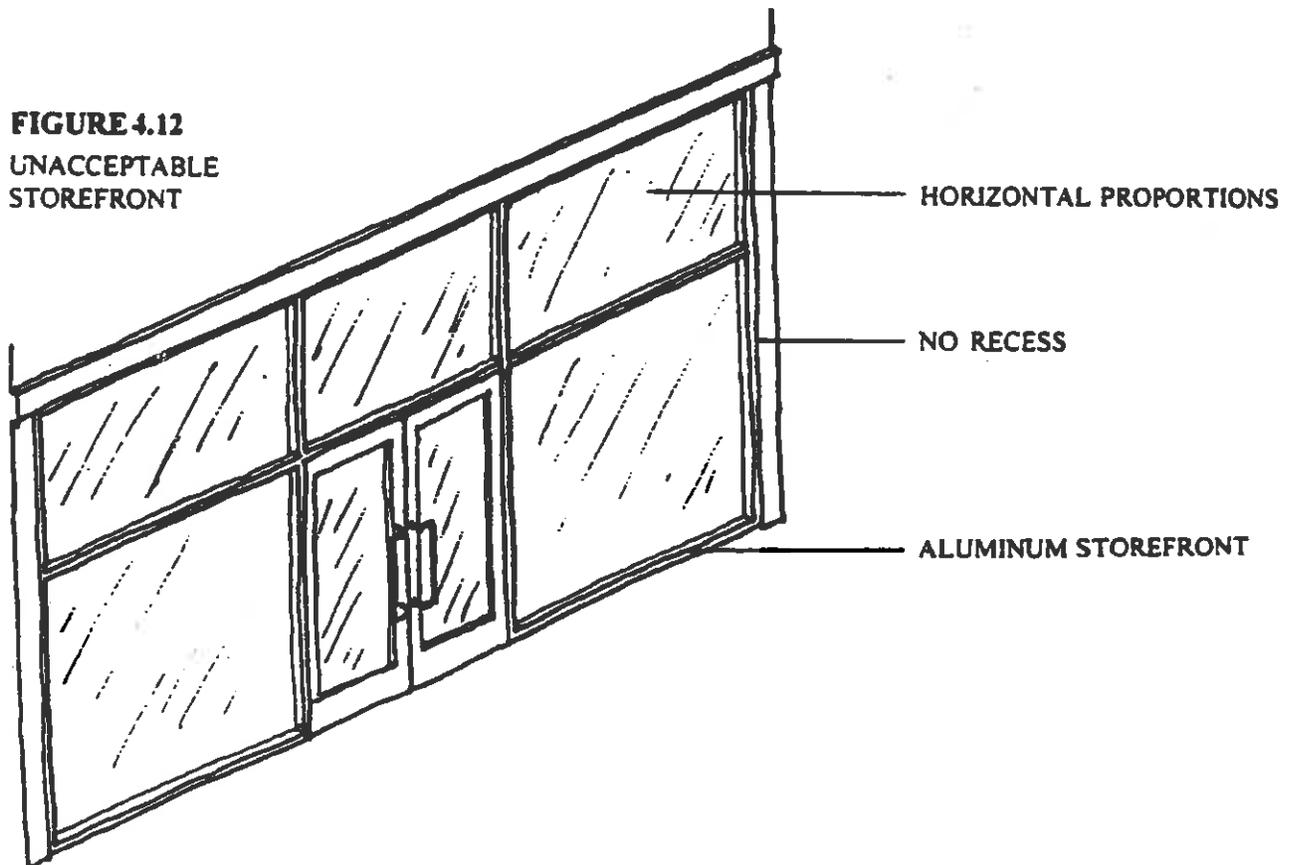


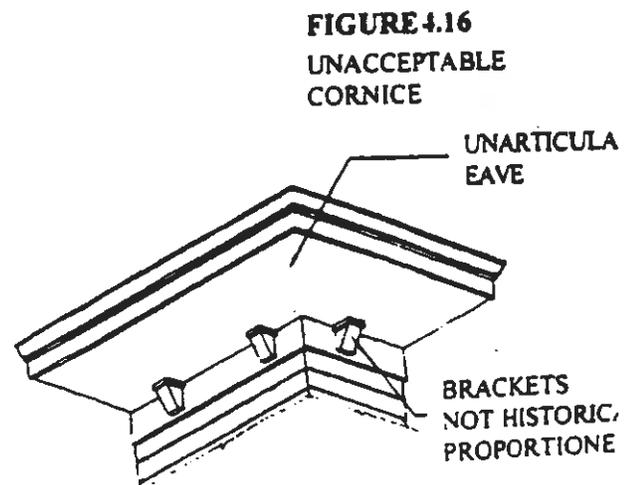
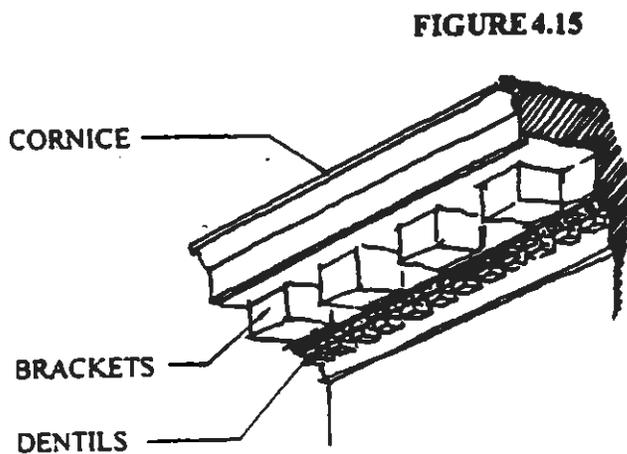
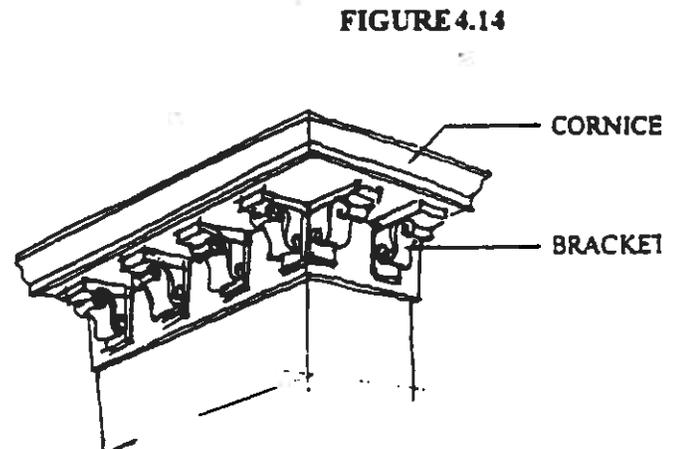
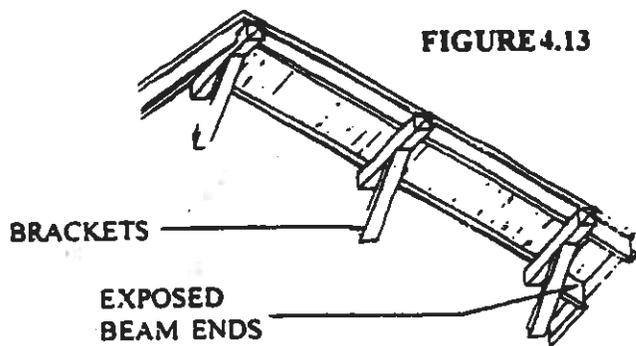
FIGURE 4.12
UNACCEPTABLE
STOREFRONT



2. Eaves and Cornices

Buildings may have pitched roofs or flat roofs with cornices. Where buildings have pitched roofs, the underside of the eaves must be articulated. They may be articulated with exposed beams, brackets or coffers. The articulation must be proportioned so that the elements can carry the visually weight of the overhang.

Where buildings have flat roofs, the cornice needs to be articulated with traditional methods, whether they are brackets, an entablature or other methods compatible with traditional architectural detailing.. These elements must be proportioned to hold the visual weight of the cornice. See Figures 4.13 - 4.16.



3. Windows

Windows must be proportioned vertically (minimum 1.8 vertical/1 horizontal). In cement plaster or masonry buildings, windows must be recessed a minimum of four inches (4") from the face of the building and may be simple punched openings or articulated with a surround. In wood buildings, window surrounds must be articulated with a substantial sill, a minimum of five-inch jamb trim and a head trim articulated with a cornice element. Glazing must be broken up into small panes, and muntins must be expressed on the exterior (not sandwiched between two glass panes). See Figures 4.17 - 4.20.

FIGURE 4.17

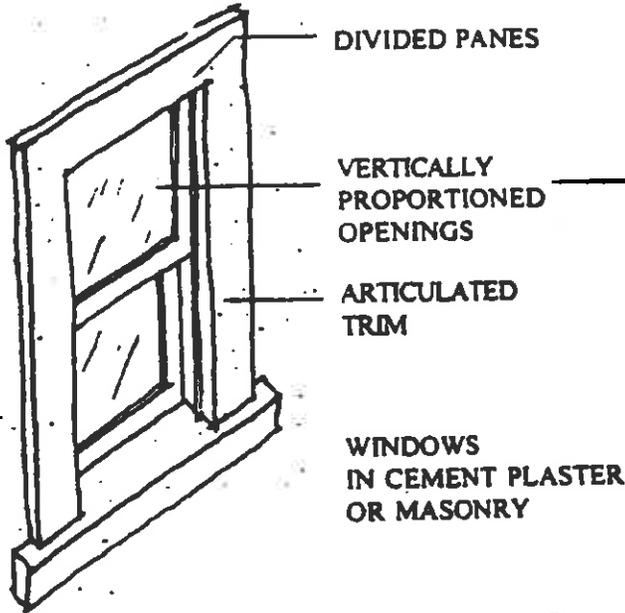


FIGURE 4.18

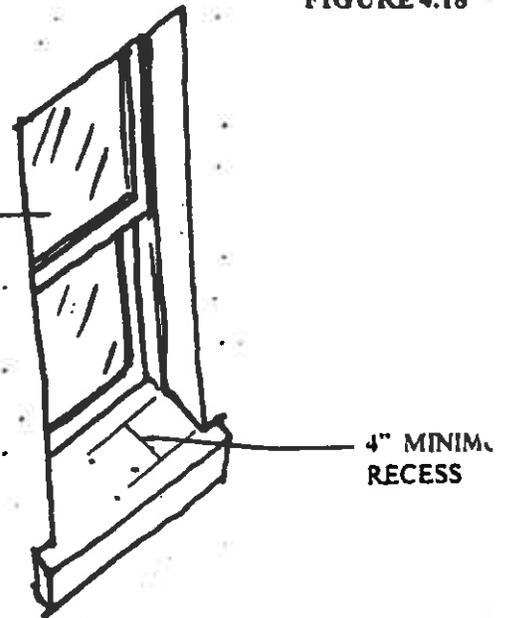


FIGURE 4.19
WINDOW IN WOOD

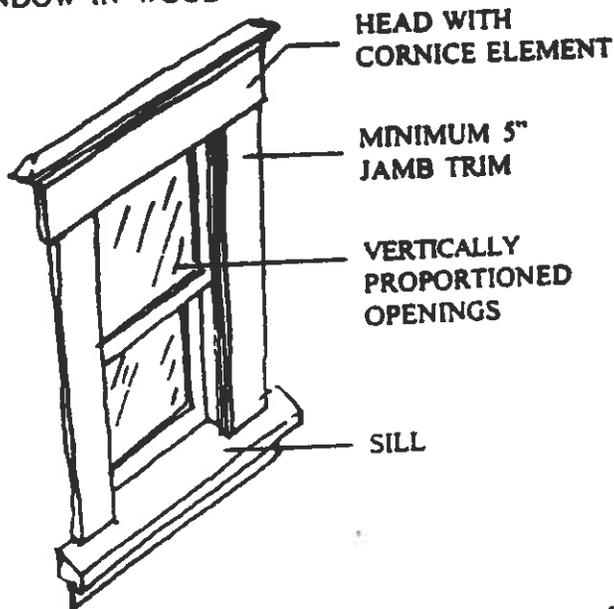
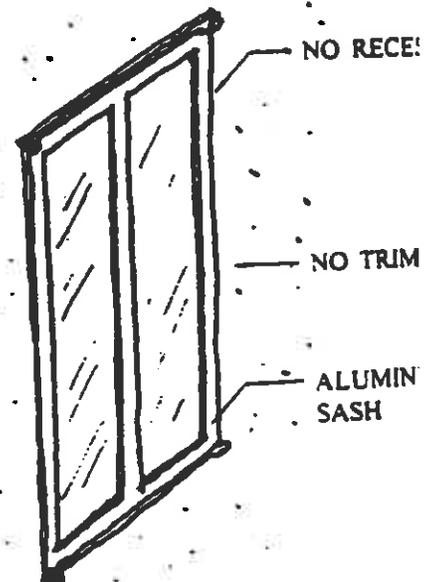
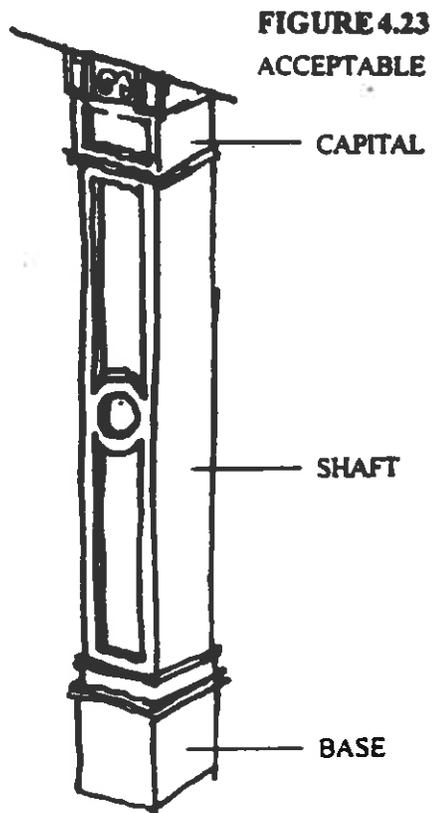
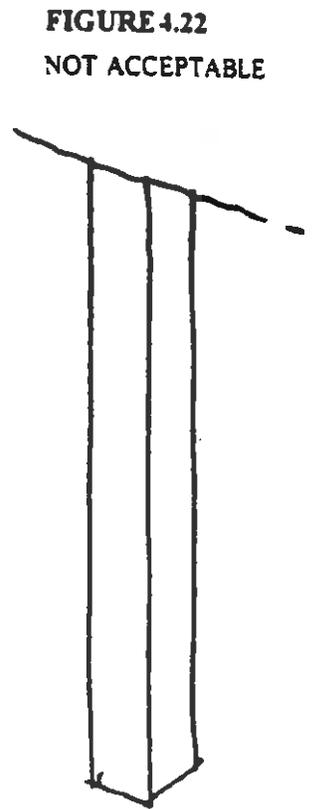
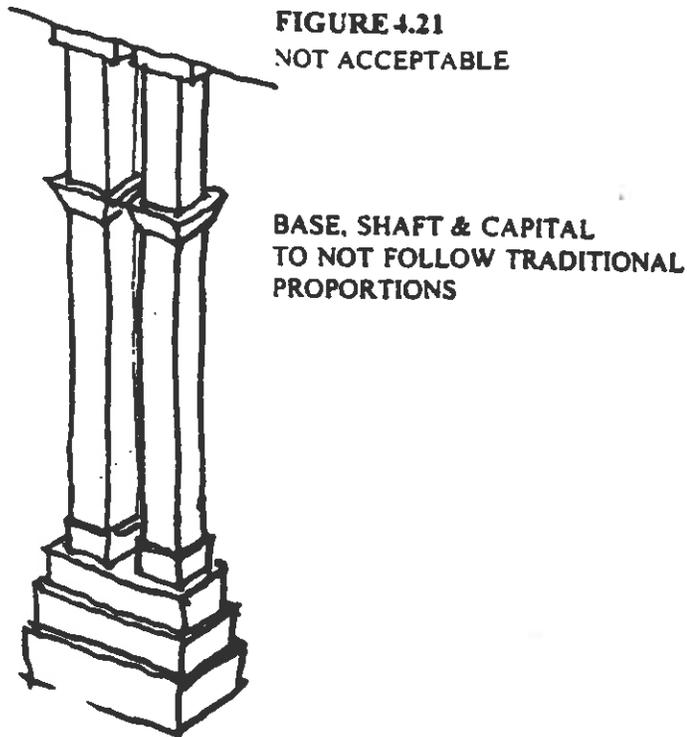


FIGURE 4.20
UNACCEPTABLE WINDOW TRIM



4. Columns and Pilasters

Freestanding columns, or pilasters expressed as a part of the storefront, must be articulated with classical proportions. They must have a base, shaft and capital relating to classical proportions. Straight unadorned shafts or simple applied wood trim are not acceptable. See Figures 4.21 - 4.23.



(Revised)

4.6.5 Transitional Areas. Individual developments outside of the historic theme zone which lie at the border of the zone. These developments may be designed with attributes of both the surrounding area and the Historic Theme Zone to avoid a harsh contrast of architectural styles.

4.7 SITE PLANNING AND DESIGN (Revised)

Policies and guidelines dealing with the siting layout and configuration of buildings on a development site, building orientation to the streetscape, pedestrian areas and parking facilities, on-site open space and landscape buffers provide specific guidance as to how the urban design goals and objectives may be implemented.

4.8 SITE PLANNING AND DESIGN OBJECTIVE (Revised)

Creative site and building design should be promoted to achieve architectural and land use intensification goals of the Plan, while ensuring efficiency and safety in automobile access and parking; clear, safe and attractive pedestrian circulation; provisions for on-site landscaping and a high-quality site appearance.

POLICIES: (Revised)

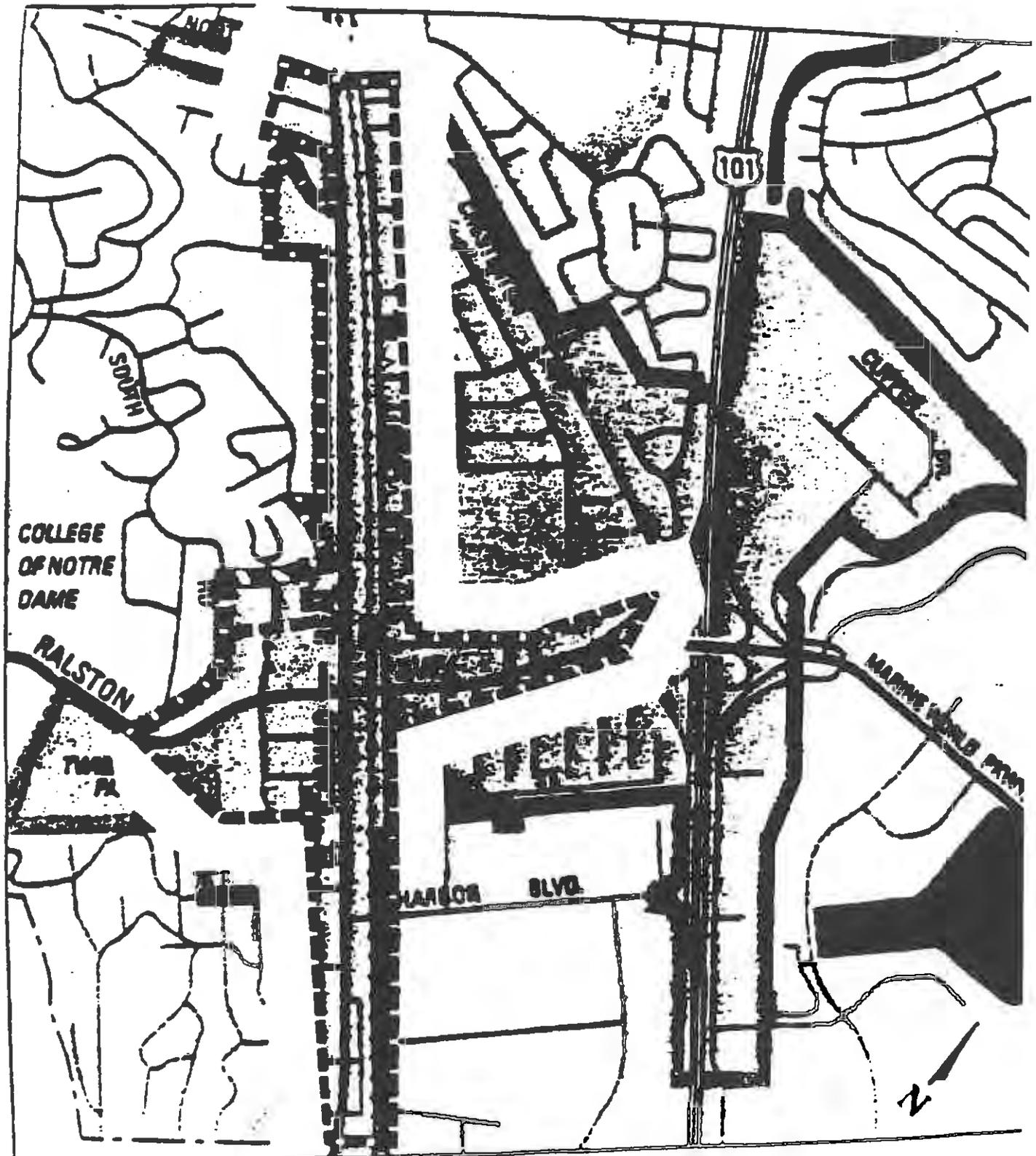
4.7.1 Building Grouping and Orientation Policy. Individual and groups of buildings shall be oriented to the street conforming to the streetwall policy of the building line and frontage policy plan and shall create an interesting appearance. Where larger parcel development is proposed, buildings shall be grouped to create convenient pedestrian access to buildings and to minimize walking distance between buildings and parking areas. Large parcel developments should be designed to reflect the historical development patterns of twenty-five to fifty foot street frontages. The architecture of these developments should have varied architectural expressions, which respond to this rhythm. Building arrangements should also form shared open spaces such as courtyards or lawn areas. A varied building height and roofscape is desirable for groups of buildings and very large single buildings to provide architectural interest and compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

4.7.3.3 Landscape Maintenance Policy: All commercial developments with conditions of approval for landscape installation shall be required to enter into a landscape maintenance agreement for on-site and sidewalk landscaping. The agreement shall prohibit the topping of trees or trimming more than 1/3 of the tree foliage unless prior approval is granted by the City. The agreement shall provide for the fines and the installation of replacements for trees topped without City approval, at the property owner's expense.

4.7.4.4 Street Lighting Policy: All street and parking lot lighting standards shall conform to the City "acorn" design, and shall include integrated, interior shields to avoid the spread of light skyward and direct light downward. Existing Acorn lighting should be retrofit to this standard.

MAP #5

RECOMMENDED AREA SUBJECT TO DESIGN THEME ■■■■■■



**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELMONT
RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE
DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN AND GENERAL PLAN
MODIFYING ARCHITECTURAL THEME GUIDELINES
(APPL. NO. 98-1065)**

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has considered a recommended amendments to the Downtown Specific Plan and General Plan to modify architectural design standards and the area of applicability with the downtown Belmont commercial areas; and,

WHEREAS, the Commission has adopted a negative declaration of environmental significance for this amendment during its actions on prior recommendations of the Downtown Task Force; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council considered the recommended Architectural Design Guidelines on September 14, 28, and October 12, 1999 and referred the Guidelines back to the Planning Commission with direction; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, upon receipt of the referral from the Council, considered and additional policy in a public hearing on February 1, 2000, and recommended adoption of the following additional policy:

4.6.2 Historic Architectural Theme Zone Guidelines

G. Village Center and Abutting Blocks Special Requirements

Within those blocks designated Village Center and the blocks immediately abutting to the North across Ralston Avenue, the West across Sixth Avenue, and to the South across Waltermire Street the use of cement plaster exterior materials shall be limited to building accents only and not be the predominant exterior material. The architecture shall avoid Spanish, colonial revival, Italianate, and Mediterranean themes and utilize Shingle, Craftsman, Late Victorian, Edwardian, and Bungalow styles. shall r. us

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the change is required to achieve the goals and objectives of this City in that:

- The new standards will provide better and clearer guidance to property owners.
- The new policies will provide for a more cohesive architectural appearance that will help define the image of the downtown area by eliminating competing architectural themes.
- The area of applicability will be more inclusive and aid in creating an enduring and consistent image for the Downtown Belmont area.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the proposed amendments to the Downtown Architectural Theme Zones chapter of the Downtown Specific Plan be amended to incorporate the new policies and regulations and delete obsolete provisions as shown in the document entitled "Architectural Theme and Treatment Policy" dated April 6, 1999 attached and made a part hereof, together with the following additional policy:

4.6.2 Historic Architectural Theme Zone Guidelines

G. Village Center and Abutting Blocks Special Requirements

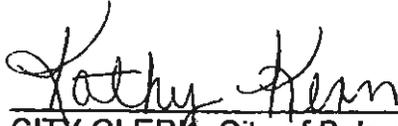
Within those blocks designated Village Center and the blocks immediately abutting to the North across Ralston Avenue, the West across Sixth Avenue, and to the South across Waltermire Street the use of cement plaster exterior materials shall be limited to building accents only and not be the predominant exterior material. The architecture shall avoid Spanish, colonial revival, Italianate, and Mediterranean themes and utilize Shingle, Craftsman, Late Victorian, Edwardian, and Bungalow styles.

shall
u:

* * * * *

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the Belmont City Council held on February 22, 2000 by the following vote:

AYES,
COUNCILMEMBERS: Warden, Hahn, Wright, Rianda, Cook
NOES,
COUNCILMEMBERS: None
ABSENT,
COUNCILMEMBERS: None
ABSTAIN,
COUNCILMEMBERS: None


CITY CLERK, City of Belmont

APPROVED:


MAYOR, City of Belmont

* Amended by City Council at meeting 2/22/00